

Saturday January 10 1998

Abu Dhabi D 8.50  
Algeria US\$ 2  
Amman FF 10  
Athens AS 30  
Bahrain BD 0.85  
Beijing R 10  
Belgrade LV 5.80  
Bogota CO 1.05  
Buenos Aires AR 1.20  
Cairo EG 1.00  
Canton HK 1.00  
Cebu PH 1.00  
Damascus SY 1.00  
Dhaka TK 1.00  
Hankow US\$ 1.00  
Harbin R 1.00  
Hong Kong HK\$ 1.00  
Istanbul TL 1.00  
Jakarta ID 1.00  
Kuala Lumpur MY 1.00  
London GB 1.00  
Lyons FR 1.00  
Manila PH 1.00  
Medan ID 1.00  
Moscow R 1.00  
New Delhi IN 1.00  
Oman OMR 1.00  
Paris FR 1.00  
Rangoon MY 1.00  
Riyadh SR 1.00  
Singapore SG\$ 1.00  
Tehran IR 1.00  
Tokyo JP 1.00  
Yokohama JP 1.00

# The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL  
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

Have the Queen's subjects fallen out of love?

## Palace versus the people

The Week, page 13

Interview: Michael Winner

## A passionate man indeed

The Week, page 15

Guscott back in the thick of it

## Centre of attention

The Week, Sport page 24



Loyalist prisoners reverse their position after talks with Mowlam

# The gamble pays off

John Muthin  
Ireland Correspondent

**M**O Mowlam's audacious gamble in last night's peace talks with the UDA/UFF prisoners succeeded last night when they reversed their opposition to the peace process. The decision means that the Ulster Democratic Party will take its place at the negotiating table when talks resume on Monday.

Another loyalist political party, the Progressive Unionist Party, which speaks for the Ulster Volunteer Force, delayed its decision. It will make its mind up tomorrow.

Security sources are, however, worried that a Loyalist Volunteer Force attack over the weekend could derail the diplomatic efforts of the past week. The LVF is opposed to the ceasefire and peace process, and has killed two Catholics since the murder of its leader, Billy Wright, at the Maze fortnight ago.

Dr Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, met the five-man leadership of the 130 UDA/UFF prisoners at the Maze for 50 minutes. She emphasised that there could be no settlement on Northern Ireland's future without talks and promised a more important role for the talks sub-committee dealing with confidence building measures.

Asked afterwards about prisoners and possible changes in parole arrangements, Dr Mowlam said: "We can get confidence in the talks process and if we can get progress in the weeks and months ahead, within that context a number of issues can be addressed." She ruled out any benefits for prisoners belonging to paramilitary organisations actively engaged in terrorism.

Among the UDA/UFF leadership she met in the governor's office at H-Block 7 were Michael Stone, who is serving six life sentences for murder, including the killing of three mourners at an IRA funeral in 1988; and Johnny Adair, nicknamed Mad Dog. He was jailed in 1985 for 16 years for directing terrorism as UFF commander on Belfast's Shankill Road.

Dr Mowlam apologised to victims' relatives who had complained about her initiative. She thanked others who had suffered but who had telephoned their support.

She said: "I have listened



Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, walking around the Maze yesterday with the prison's governor, Martin Mogg

and it's a difficult balance, but I don't want to leave a stone unturned. I want to be sure we did everything we could to keep the process moving forward."

Dr Mowlam later briefly met IRA prisoners' leaders and a delegation from the Ulster Volunteer Force in the governor's offices in their respective blocks, H-Block 6 and H-Block 1. Among those she spoke to was Harry McGuire, an IRA prisoner serving two life sentences for the murder of two army corporals

in 1988; and Noel Large, a UVF man with four life terms. Whereas the UDA/UFF prisoners were reluctant and their political party, the UDP, desperate to stay in the talks, the situation is reversed in the other loyalist grouping. UVF inmates are keen that the Progressive Unionist Party, increasingly frustrated with what it sees as its bit-player status, stays at Stormont. But the PUP may now be swayed by the UDP's presence at Castle Buildings on Monday.

Dr Mowlam, who has been accused of setting a dangerous precedent, confirmed she would go back to see convicted terrorists if necessary.

That position has proved controversial in Northern Ireland, and Lord Alderdice, leader of the Alliance Party, launched an angry attack last night. He said that the loyalist paramilitaries had hyped up the situation, and Dr Mowlam had fallen into their web. "Both she and they can claim a great victory, thoroughly encircling them as the in-

portant arbitrators of our future, not democratic politicians."

Gary McMichael, leader of the UDP, denied there had been any brinkmanship. "It was a symbolic recognition by Mo Mowlam in coming to see the prisoners and that they and the issues at the heart of this crisis were being taken seriously."

Mr McMichael was relieved at the decision of the UDA/UFF prisoners. But he warned that the political parties had better get down to

work at Stormont. The Government's timetable provides for a May deadline when an agreed settlement is due to be put to referendums in Northern Ireland and the Republic. But the negotiations have still to begin dealing with substantive issues. "The main thing is to seize the opportunity now," he said.

Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, welcomed the loyalist prisoners' decision and the presence of the UDP at the talks. He said it was up to the Government to take the

talks "by the scruff of the neck" and move the process along.

Leader comment, page 8

## Interests: wines, spirits and dodging beggars. Who's He?

Sarah Hall

**I**T IS an exaggerated tale of town versus gown, more ivory tower versus shop doorway. Writing from the former about the latter in the 1998 edition of *Who's Who*, Professor George Salmond lists among his recreations "the daily avoidance of asparagus, alcoholics and deranged individuals in the streets of Cambridge".

Pleasures such as good wine, malt whisky and sports cars also delight the 45-year-old professor of molecular and micro-biology.

Yesterday, at his department near King's College, the professor proved elusive. A postdoctorate colleague suggested he was a "shy" man and would not

deny the comments were made tongue in cheek. On the streets the response was different. "Most academics don't live in the real world and such comments are endemic in Cambridge," John Rees, aged 41, a computer programmer, said. He described the city's "homelessness problem as a 'phenomenon'".

Katy, aged 18, huddled outside the regency Downing College, said: "I'd say to him, 'I don't choose to be homeless'. I'm thrown out of the night shelter at nine in the morning until seven at night, so where am I supposed to go?"

Shelter, the charity for the homeless, says the city has a serious homelessness problem. Spokeswoman Rachel O'Brien said: "With a population that's fairly wealthy, there's a larger problem

than one would expect." In a short tour of the city yesterday there seemed to be a huddled beggar for every college or upmarket tea-shop. Each cobbled lane yielded another character to be avoided by Professor Salmond.

But, despite 95 arrests for begging in the last year, a police spokesman said a crackdown had reduced the number of aggressive incidents. Only six arrests were made for begging between November 25 to January 5.

Back on the streets, Billy, 40, an unemployed welder from Glasgow, who arrived three weeks ago, proved an unlikely ally for Professor Salmond: "There are a few deranged individuals and alcoholics and a lot of heroin addicts. Some make a pest of themselves; that's why I won't sleep in the hostels."

## Royals 'vulnerable' after mishandling Diana crisis

Luke Harding

**T**HE royal family spectacularly mishandled the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and emerged from the worst royal crisis this century vulnerable and frightened, according to research commissioned by the Guardian.

The Queen's live broadcast on the eve of Diana's funeral, after public opinion forced the royal family to return to Buckingham Palace, was generally perceived as being unconvincing.

But there was also sympathy for the predicament of the Queen and other royals, and for princes William and Harry, after Diana's death.

The findings emerge from a focus group organised by a market research company, One World Research, which

was asked by the Guardian to gauge public attitudes towards the royal family.

The exercise mirrors that carried out by Buckingham Palace. Two months ago — possibly at the suggestion of Alastair Campbell, Downing Street's press officer — the palace took the unprecedented step of asking MORI, the polling organisation, to carry out research on its behalf. The move was widely seen as the latest in a succession of modernising moves. MORI's conclusions will be presented to the Palace shortly but will remain secret.

While the Queen was seen by one member of the focus group as "a symbol of the nation", she was also perceived as "now being a bit dumpy". There were scathing verdicts on Princess Margaret and the Duke of

York, and an indifferent assessment of the Prince of Wales. Only the Princess Royal emerged from the focus group in an entirely positive light.

The group broadly agreed that the royal family was too numerous and that the number of royals on the Civil List should be further slimmed.

Earl Spencer was roundly condemned for charging visitors £2.50 to visit Diana's grave at Althorp, the Spencer family estate in Northamptonshire. The arrangement was described by one panelist as ghastly.

"The royal yacht Britannia, decommissioned last year, was seen as an outdated symbol of privilege. 'They loved that yacht more than they loved Diana,' one member of the focus group said.

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4	5	12	24	24	

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Sir Michael Tippett, 1905 - 1998

# Death of a musical visionary

Little-regarded student became grand old man of British music

Don Chisler  
Arts Correspondent

Sir Michael Tippett, the composer who as a student was told by a leading conductor that he had no particular ability but should not be discouraged from trying, has died aged 92. The little-regarded student became one of the most important composers of the century. His best-known and most-performed work, inspired by the horror of the Holocaust, was the oratorio *A Child of Our Time*, written in 1941.

Sir Michael, a vigorous and active figure right up until his death, was taken ill with pneumonia in mid-November on a trip to Stockholm for a 12-day festival of his music. He died at his London home on Thursday.

Speaking from New York, conductor Andrew Davies, who organised the Swedish festival, said: "He was one of the most remarkable musical visionaries. His operas were very groundbreaking. The *Midsummer Marriage* is one of the great operas of the 20th century. It is a piece of great depth."

Fellow composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies said: "One will miss dreadfully the wicked twinkle, the quirky but profound criticism, and his particular kind, gentle laughter, full of a profound joy yet encompassing, and enfolding the deepest, widest sorrow."

Composer Steve Martland, a close friend of Sir Michael's, said: "It is a huge loss but his music will stay on. He never wanted to talk about his music, he was extremely aware of everything going on in the world and wanted to discuss it. He still had a barbed wit when necessary."

Known as the grand old man of British music, Sir Michael was acclaimed for his humanitarian vision. He continued composing into his late 80s, and became a much-loved figure in the music world. His music was inspired by humanitarian and spiritual concerns, from the Holocaust to poverty to Jung and Goethe. But he was also deeply influenced by the contemporary, and refused to indulge his past achievements: his last work, the opera *New Year*, even contained rap music.

A man of strong beliefs, he briefly joined the Communist Party in the late 1930s and became president of the pacifist Peace Pledge Union. In 1943 he was jailed for two months on account of his conscientious objection.

Born in London, the son of a lawyer who later became a theatre owner, and a suffragette mother who was also imprisoned for her beliefs, he was a late developer musically. He gained a place at the Royal College of Music where he studied under Malcolm Bergin, who dismissed his ability, and Adrian Boult. On leaving in 1928 he took



Sir Michael photographed in 1994. Friends remember his gentle laughter and barbed wit

PHOTOGRAPH: JANE BOWN

up a teaching post in Surrey, but it was not until 1935 that his first published work, a string quartet, appeared. His first notable work was *A Child of Our Time*, although it did not bring him immediate acclaim.

His first opera, *The Midsummer Marriage*, performed in 1935, was acclaimed by his supporters who saw it as self-indulgent and over-com-

plex. His second symphony, commissioned by the Royal Opera House, was also criticised. The *Symphony No 5* in 1972.

The symphony marked something of a departure and drew more criticism from the classical music establishment as he sought inspiration in other sources, including blues, jazz, literature and television. *Dirge*, *Straths*, *Nelson Mandela*, *Martin Luther King* and *Goethe* all had an influ-

ence on his later works. In 1959 he was made a CBE, becoming a knight in 1988. He was made Companion of Honour in 1978 and was given the Order of Merit in 1983. But, possibly because of his Englishness, he never became truly popular in Europe. He did, however, find success in the United States.

Obituary, page 7; Leader comment, page 8

## Maverick, free spirit, humanist and inspiration

"Michael Tippett was an example to us all. He lived life exuberantly, to the full, with a creative energy that inspired everyone with whom he had dealings. As a composer, the thing one learned from him above all other things, and more clearly than from anyone else, was courage: the courage to be oneself no matter what the fashion and what the cost, particularly to oneself. His rugged music, of a beauty and individuality placing it above and beyond all of us that follow, will continue to be just such an inspiration." — *Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, composer.*

"He had a vision of the way society should be and the way music should be in that society. He was a socialist in an old-fashioned sense and music had a place in that because it lifted people out of the everyday. That is his importance." — *Steve Martland, composer.*

"He was one of the most remarkable musical visionaries of his time. He will be seen as somebody who was ahead of his time. There was a whole period of post-war materialism when he was producing work of great spiritual and psychological depth and power." — *Andrew Davies, conductor.*

"The man who lived the life was the man who wrote the music, consequently they are inseparable. He sits very firmly in the strongest, richest tradition of British music: he forms part of the humanist tradition, which is that a moral imperative is

essential to a work of art, but not dogma." — *Graham Vick, opera director.*

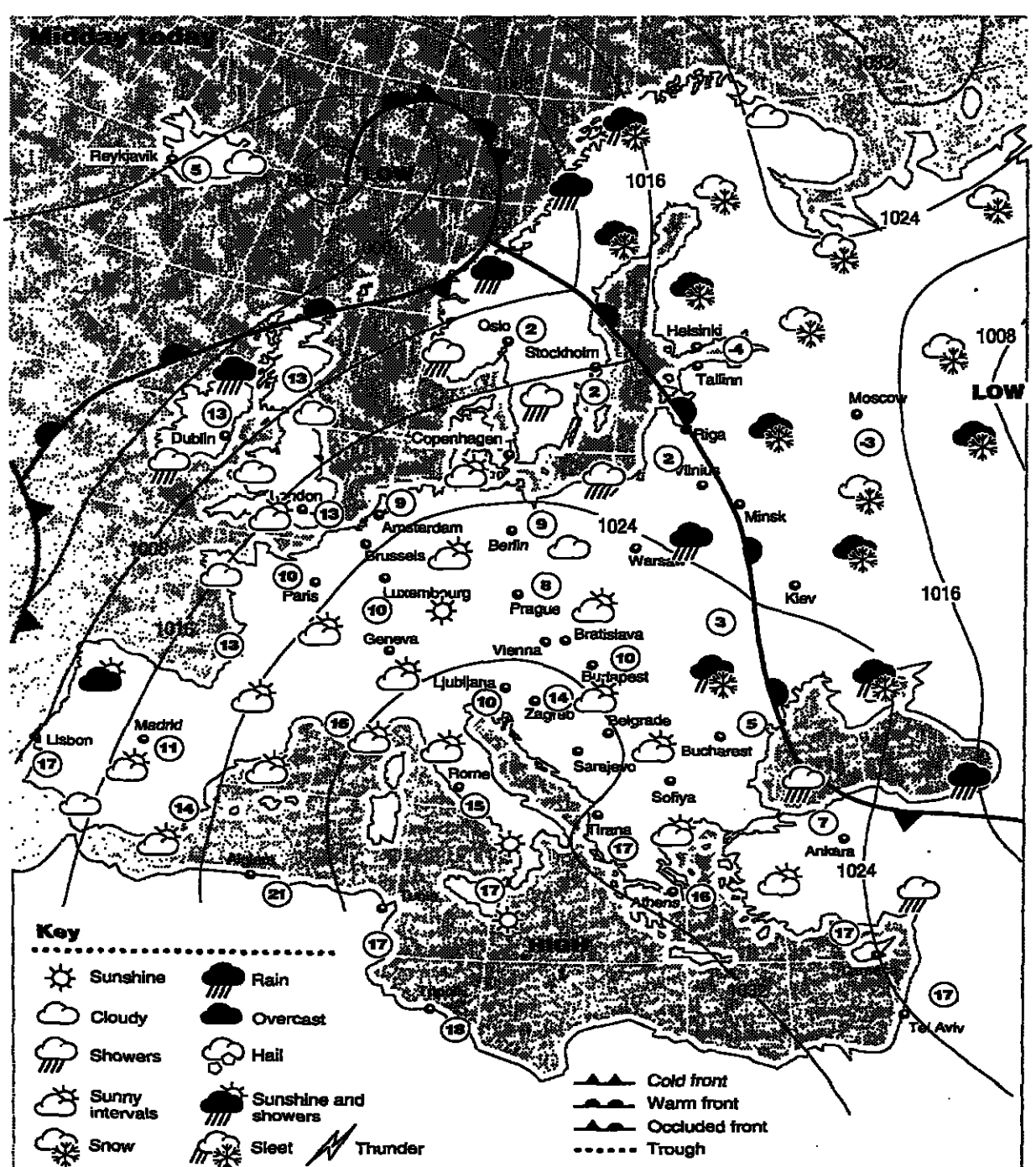
"He was not only one of the greatest composers of our time, he was one of the most humane and visionary figures in our artistic life. He leaves a huge gap. His gift was unique in his music he reached out to audiences across the world and communicated the great issues of life and death, love and hatred, innocence and maturity." — *Nicholas Kynson, controller BBC Radio 3.*

"His music has a radiance and a sense of joy and energy which is unique. In a funny way he is a very isolated figure in this century. His style is a curious mix of the modern and the archaic. There have been many composers influenced by him yet in one way that's one of his strong points: he was something of an outsider. It was a very singular vision." — *George Benjamin, composer.*

"I've always been a great admirer of his work. It has been fantastic for the musical community in this country that he stayed alive so long and so active until the end." — *James MacMillan, composer.*

"He was a maverick and a free spirit. He always thought in slightly complex and naive ways about life, but in his music this allowed a kind of order: he forms part of the humanist tradition, which is that a moral imperative is

### The weather in Europe



### Forecast for the cities

City	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
London	10-15	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28
Paris	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30
Berlin	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32
Rome	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34
Madrid	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36
Amsterdam	10-15	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28
Stockholm	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30
Moscow	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32
Warsaw	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34
Vienna	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36
Brussels	10-15	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28
Prague	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30
Budapest	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32
Sofia	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34
Belgrade	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36
Thessalonika	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36	32-38
Antwerp	10-15	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28
Brussels	12-18	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30
Amsterdam	14-20	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32
Stockholm	16-22	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34
Moscow	18-24	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36
Warsaw	20-26	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36	32-38
Vienna	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36	32-38	34-40
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### Around the world

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Vienna	22-28	24-30	26-32	28-34	30-36	32-38	34-40

### European weather outlook

There will be some heavy falls of snow and it will be rather windy but southern parts of Sweden and Norway are going to become milder, with snow turning to rain. Highs from minus 10C (14F) in the north to plus 8C (46F) in the south.

**Lower Central Europe, Germany, Austria, Switzerland:**

Any early rain in Germany will soon clear away, and fog patches across Switzerland and Austria will lift. That will leave a fine day everywhere with plenty of sunshine breaking through. Highs between 7 and 10C (45-50F).

**France:**

Early mist in central France will clear to leave plenty of sunshine in most places, although the west will be a little more cloudy. Highs from 10C (50F) in the north to 16C (61F) on the Riviera.

**Spain and Portugal:**

Much of Spain will be fine and dry with periods of sunshine. Portugal will start off dry as well but showers will break out, and they are going to spread into the west and north-west of Spain later. Highs from 11C (52F) in the cool central region to 17C (63F) on the Algarve and the Coast.

**Italy:**

Early fog patches in the north will slowly clear. Most places will be fine with plenty of sunshine and light winds. Highs between 10C (50F) in the north and 17C (63F) in the south.

**Greece:**

Early mist patches will soon clear to leave a dry and mostly sunny day. Highs between 14 and 17C (57-63F).

### Television and radio - Saturday

**BBC 1**

8.00am Flash Gordon. 8.20am News and Weather. 8.30am Children's BBC: Christopher Crocodile. 8.50am News. 9.00am The New Adventures of Pinocchio. 9.15am The Lion and the Witch. 9.30am The Lion and the Witch. 9.45am The Lion and the Witch. 10.00am The Lion and the Witch. 10.15am The Lion and the Witch. 10.30am The Lion and the Witch. 10.45am The Lion and the Witch. 11.00am The Lion and the Witch. 11.15am The Lion and the Witch. 11.30am The Lion and the Witch. 11.45am The Lion and the Witch. 12.00pm The Lion and the Witch. 12.15pm The Lion and the Witch. 12.30pm The Lion and the Witch. 12.45pm The Lion and the Witch. 1.00pm The Lion and the Witch. 1.15pm The Lion and the Witch. 1.30pm The Lion and the Witch. 1.45pm The Lion and the Witch. 2.00pm The Lion and the Witch. 2.15pm The Lion and the Witch. 2.30pm The Lion and the Witch. 2.45pm The Lion and the Witch. 3.00pm The Lion and the Witch. 3.15pm The Lion and the Witch. 3.30pm The Lion and the Witch. 3.45pm The Lion and the Witch. 4.00pm 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Prince Mohammad, moving his court from Saudi Arabia to London in search of legal ruling

Prince Mohammad bin Fahd, one of the key players in the murky Jonathan Aitken saga, last month lodged one of the largest writs ever seen in the High Court. Over 12 years, he alleges, some £144 million was plundered from his bank accounts. And now he wants it back.

Report: Luke Harding, Owen Bowcott, David Pallister, Jamie Wilson, Clare Longrigg and Christopher Elliott



Said Ayas, from student to multi-millionaire with fashionable houses and a palatial yacht, and (below) Prince Mohammad's claims of how Ayas plundered royal coffers

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE 1997 Folio No.

QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION

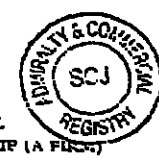
COMMERCIAL COURT

BETWEEN

HRH PRINCE MOHAMMAD BIN FAHAD BIN  
ABDULAZIZ AL SAUD

- and -

- (1) SAID MOHAMED AYAS
- (2) DANIELE MARIE AYAS
- (3) MARK RAYMOND VERE NICOLL
- (4) THE VERE NICOLL PARTNERSHIP (A FIRM)
- (5) GENEROTTE MANAGEMENT SA
- (6) LEONARD LUGSDIN
- (7) NAYLA BORSALI
- (8) MAY BORSALI
- (9) HOUDE ABDEL RAHMAN
- (10) LUCIEN FRAU



## On the trail of a prince's missing millions

### Staff face court demand for cash

**A**FTER a congenial break in the Bahamas last Easter, Prince Mohammad bin Fahd awoke one morning and realised some of his money was missing. As one of the world's richest men — and the son of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia — he could be forgiven for overlooking the odd \$100,000. But the situation, as his accountants coolly informed him, was much graver. Some \$221 million (\$144 million), it transpired, had vanished from his accounts between 1985 and 1997. And remarkably, the prince, who was fond of tennis, chocolate cake and blondes (not necessarily in that order), appeared not to have noticed.

Back in the governor's residence in Al Khobar, Dhahran, where he presided over Saudi Arabia's oil-rich eastern province, the prince realised he was in trouble. On paper, he was still fabulously rich. But informed sources suggest the prince had overreached himself, and was not as financially buoyant as he once was. His legendary abilities to find ways to spend millions of dollars a week, his huge entourage and fewer opportunities for siphoning off money from oil deals had taken a heavy toll. Perhaps some banks were getting restless about money he owed them. It may have prompted his aides to make a closer survey of his assets than usual. Someone, he concluded, had been hacking large chunks off his huge petro-dollar fortune.

His suspicions fell immediately on Said Ayas, who worked as the prince's close hand man and business manager. Thirty years with the prince had transformed Ayas — a dapper, elfin figure born in Lebanon — from a humble medical student into a multi-millionaire who owned lavish properties in London, Paris,

Houston, Geneva and Riyadh, as well as a \$20 million yacht, the Katamarino.

Much of this, the prince maintained, was bought using his money and he wanted the Katamarino in recompense. He also wanted Ayas's home, where he lived in some splendour with his French wife Daniele, and their five children, at 40 Hyde Park Gate in Knightsbridge, central London, together with a declaration that he, Mohammad, owned another three flats registered to Ayas in the same block. And he wanted back the \$231 million, which Ayas had allegedly siphoned off from the prince's bank accounts in London, Geneva, Cannes and Munich.

Where, then, had the money

Ayas, meanwhile, according to his solicitor Mark Raphael, the founder of the firm which successfully represented Kevin Maxwell, is preparing to "strenuously defend" himself against all of the prince's allegations. It is possible Ayas will argue that the missing cash was used to settle the prince's vast gambling debts. As his right-hand man, Ayas frequently settled bills for the prince and his travelling entourage.

Remarkably, one name is missing from the writ. It is that of Jonathan Aitken, the former Conservative MP and cabinet minister whose libel action against the Guardian and Granada television collapsed in a swirl of perjury last summer. This is surprising. Aitken, after all, worked as Prince Mohammad's London "fixer" for more than 20 years and was a close member of his circle. The former chief secretary to the Treasury is good friends with Said Ayas; indeed, Ayas is godfather to Aitken's teenage daughter Victoria.

**Where, then, had the money gone?**  
According to the prince, it vanished into the bank accounts of 25 of Ayas's family and friends, and into associated firms

gone? According to the prince, whose writ was lodged with the London High Court on December 9, the cash had vanished into the bank accounts of 25 of Ayas's family and friends, and into associated companies, who appear in the writ as co-defendants.

**T**HE defendants include Abdul Rahman, Ayas's nephew, whom Jonathan Aitken used when constructing a highly fanciful story to explain the payment of his notorious hotel bill at the Paris Ritz in September 1993. The cash also disappeared into Panamanian shipping companies and shadow offshore firms in the Caribbean and Guernsey.

toria. Such is the bond between them, Ayas corroborated Aitken's demonstrably false account of who paid his Paris Ritz hotel bill.

Two other players in the rumbling Aitken saga are named as co-defendants: Mark Vere Nicholl, an old Etonian who advised Ayas on legal matters, and Leonard Lugsdin, a Canadian business consultant, involved in a telecommunications deal which reportedly earned the prince \$500 million in commission in 1977.

Despite Aitken's curious omission, the writ throws new light over his infamous weekend at the Paris Ritz in September 1992. That Aitken lied on oath about his trip — by claiming his wife Lolita

paid his hotel bill when she was, in fact, in Switzerland — is well-known. More baffling, however, is the fact that Mrs Aitken flew back to London 10 hours later than her husband on Monday September 20, 1992. Why not fly back together? They had spent the night in Switzerland, almost certainly with the Ayases at their Geneva home.

Buried in the appendix attached to the writ, detailing hundreds of bank transactions across the world, is an illuminating entry. The writ alleges that Said Ayas helped himself to \$711,000 from the prince's account at the Union Bank of Switzerland that morning.

**O**N THE Monday in question, Aitken was obliged to return early from what had been officially described as his "private trip" for a briefing tour of Scottish military bases. The inevitable suspicion remains that Lolita deliberately delayed her departure until Said Ayas had visited the bank. A mere coincidence? We do not know. There is no doubt, however, that Aitken's relationship with Said Ayas had long been a mutually profitable one. And Lolita, it emerged last summer, was not averse to courting large sums of US dollars in her handbag.

The writ provides dramatic evidence of just what can happen when old friends fall out. Last June, Said Ayas was placed under house arrest by an enraged Prince Mohammad, who blamed him for the parlous state of the royal finances. Ayas was incarcerated at a house in Dhahran, with two armed guards and a television for company. At one stage he disappeared into a Saudi prison, emerging, shaken, a few days later. Last autumn he allegedly escaped, dressed as a woman. Mr Ayas now appears to be back at his home in Hyde Park Gate.

Yesterday, cooking smells wafted down the corridor from his third-floor apartment, and the echo of children's voices could be heard

down an entrance lobby decorated with tasteful paintings. A Chinese minder, seemingly employed for his kung-fu skills, insisted Mr Ayas was "away". Mrs Ayas, meanwhile, was "busy".

Over at Kirdford, West Sussex, in a farm surrounded by rolling countryside dotted with woodland, Mark Vere Nicholl was also "not at home", according to his wife. His firm, the Vere Nicholl Partnership, is also named on

the prince's writ. The main entrance of the company is sealed off by a remote, electronically-operated five-bar gate.

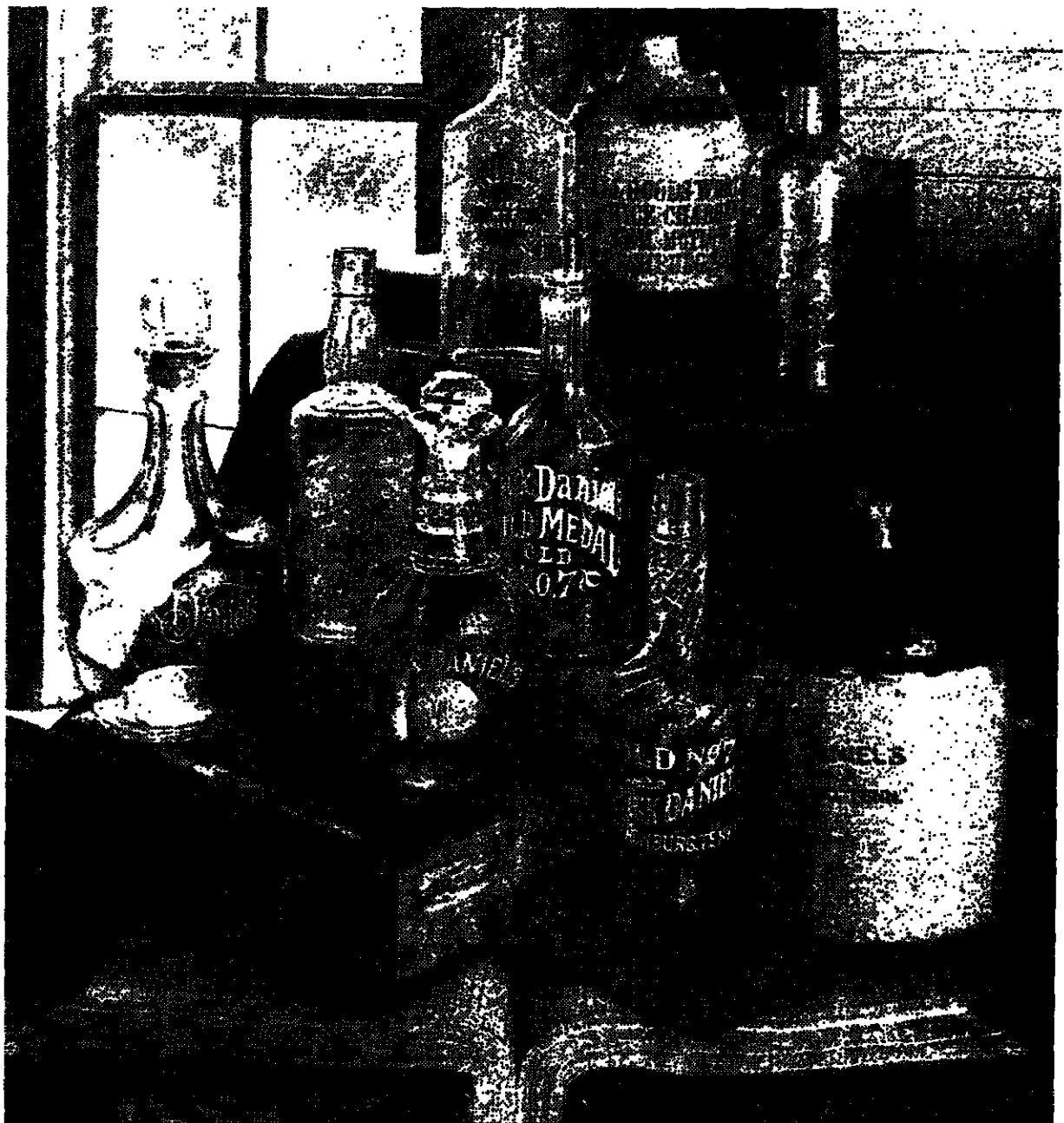
In Sardinia, Lucien Frau the prince's Swiss chauffeur and housekeeper, says he knows little about the writ. Besides, he is only "a poor man" (although the writ's detailed schedule says he withdrew \$230,000 from the prince's account in September 1990). He denies any wrongdoing.

Meanwhile, in Port Vauban, Antibes, the Katamarino has been moored for more than a year. "Mr Ayas used to be the owner but now I'm confused," its watchman, Patrick, said yesterday.

Saudi royals often have rows with their advisers. Rarely, though, do they sue them in the embarrassingly high-profile arena of the High Court in London. The prince's barrister, Craig Orr, and solicitor, Ian Taylor, refused to

comment yesterday. But other legal experts say recovering the \$231 million will be a tricky business. The action, which will be heard in private, could grind on and on.

Jonathan Aitken, meanwhile, whose spirit hovers over every page of the extraordinary legal document, consoles himself with religion while the Metropolitan police investigation into his High Court debacle continues interminably.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

### In the prince's court

#### PRINCE MOHAMMAD BIN FAHAD

The multi-millionaire son of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. In 1974 he became chairman of The Al-Bilad group of companies, of which Jonathan Aitken was a director of the UK arm. The prince reportedly pocketed \$500 million in commission payments on a Saudi telephone contract in the 1970s. In 1994 he became Governor of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

**SAID AYAS**  
Lebanese-born, but holding French and Saudi passports.

Acted as "a man of affairs" for Prince Mohammad bin Fahd between the early 1970s and last year when he was held under house arrest in Saudi Arabia by the prince for alleged fraud. Ayas, who describes himself as "a businessman of independent means" has houses in London, the USA, Saudi Arabia and France. He is also a close friend of Jonathan Aitken and godfather to his daughter.

**DANIELE MARIE AYAS**  
French-born wife of Said Ayas and mother of their five children, aged 14 to 22. Quiet and

softly spoken she lives in the family apartment off Hyde Park and helps administer the couple's numerous homes around the world.

**ABDUL RAHMAN**  
The nephew of Said Ayas and also named on the writ. He was used by Aitken to construct a fanciful story about the confusion surrounding the payment of his Ritz bill in September 1993.

**MARK VERE NICHOLL**  
Old Etonian Vere Nicholl, a solicitor, met Prince Mohammad in 1977 when he helped to

draw up the contract for a private jet the prince was buying. In 1979 he became a director of the British arm of Prince Mohammad's firm, Al-Bilad, along with Said Ayas and Jonathan Aitken.

Both Vere Nicholl and his company, the Vere Nicholl Partnership, are named on the writ.

**MAY BORSALI**  
Said Ayas's sister lives in Geneva, along with Nayla, her daughter. Alleged in the writ to have received more than \$300,000 paid to them. They deny all wrongdoing.



**I was rather busy at the time, and when someone from Gateshead rang me up and said, "Look we would like you to take this seriously," my reply was, "I don't do roundabout art."**

Artist Anthony Gormley on Britain's biggest sculpture

**The Week, page 18**

## 4 BRITAIN

# Some lessons face axe as schools told to focus on basics

John Carvel  
Education Editor

**P**RI-MARY schools will be allowed to drop most of their lessons in history, geography, art, music and physical education as part of a radical plan being prepared by ministers to concentrate maximum effort on the basics of literacy and numeracy.

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, is expected to announce next week that schools should focus their energies on delivering a core curriculum of English, maths, science and information technology.

He is understood to have accepted advice from Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, that the Government will not achieve its ambitious education targets for 11-year-olds if it does not give teachers more freedom to pursue the current broadly-based curriculum.

The move comes close to abandoning a commitment by Conservative ministers that there would be no changes in the national curriculum until 2000. That promise was made in order to give teachers an assurance of stability after Sir Ron Dearing settled a curriculum war which brought chaos in the classroom in 1994.

Mr Blunkett is expected to argue that he is not changing the statutory obligations on schools to deliver Sir Ron's nine-subject syllabus, plus a compulsory modicum of religious education. Teachers of children aged five to 11 will still be expected to "have regard to" the detailed study programmes laid down by the



Chris Woodhead: warned targets were in jeopardy

Government's curriculum advisers.

But there will be no requirement on teachers to follow these programmes in full and no criticism from Mr Woodhead's school inspectors if the amount of time spent on the "minor" subjects is reduced to a bare minimum.

Although the details have still to be worked out, this looks like a formula to give maximum discretion to heads and governing bodies. Some are likely to retain the present timetable to avoid disruption, but others may decide to concentrate almost exclusively on meeting the literacy and numeracy targets on which their schools are assessed.

The proposals are likely to be welcomed by teacher unions, which have argued that the broad curriculum is hard to deliver in the time available. But they could increase problems for secondary schools serving 20 or

more feeder primaries if entrants at 11 get different educational experiences, some of them neglecting history, geography and other "minor" subjects.

The decision looks like a victory for Mr Woodhead over Chris Tate, chief executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, who has been warning ministers not to abandon a commitment to "breadth and richness" in primary education.

Shortly after the election, ministers promised there would be "no quick fixes" in changing the curriculum before the scheduled date in 2000. But they have staked the Government's political reputation on achieving a big increase in 11-year-olds' literacy and numeracy skills by the next election.

The proportion reaching the target level in English is meant to rise from 57 per cent in 1996 to 80 per cent by 2002. The proportion reaching the standard expected of their age in maths is supposed to rise from 55 per cent to 75 per cent over the same period.



Minister without portfolio Peter Mandelson emerges, grinning from Kalligraphy, West Yorkshire, after inspecting a team of 2,000ft below ground yesterday. Mr Mandelson spent two hours on the tour with Richard Budge, head of owners RLB Mining and Insulation. This is an industry with a future. PHOTOGRAPH: ADAM OUELHAN

## Chancellor and Blair 'fought over top taxes'

Seumas Milne  
Labour Editor

**G**ORDON Brown clashed with Tony Blair both over his unsuccessful demand for a top rate of tax of 50 per cent on incomes over £100,000 and over the extent of Labour's utility windfall tax, according to the forthcoming biography of the Chancellor written with his "full co-operation".

But while Mr Brown backed down over a new tax band for the well-off at a secret meeting at Mr Blair's home in the run-up to the election, he got his way over a more ambitious tax on the super profits of the privatised monopolies.

Mr Brown's press secretary, Charlie Whelan, yesterday denied the book, Gordon Brown: The Biography — which was put on sale prematurely in Glasgow — was "authorised".

He also insisted that Mr Brown had refused to talk about the bitter events surrounding Tony Blair's rise to power at the future Chancellor's expense.

But Mr Brown is quoted directly speaking about the problems of the leadership race. And Mr Whelan has conceded the co-operation claimed in the book, whose author, Paul Routledge, was given full access to the Chancellor, his family, and aides.

The book reveals that Tony Blair was "not happy" about Mr Brown's desire to take his entire "inner cabinet" of Charlie Whelan, Ed Balls, Ed Miliband and Sue Nye with him to the Treasury last year.

Labour sources claim Mr Blair was particularly concerned about Mr Whelan, but the Chancellor got his way.

The biography quotes an "observer" of the Blair-Brown relationship saying that the Chancellor "regards himself entirely as Tony's equal" and describes an incident when Mr Blair went into Mr Brown's office and found him on the telephone.

"Instead of making his excuses and putting down the telephone to speak to his boss, Brown carried on his conversation and kept Blair waiting until he had finished."

The success of parliamentary candidates linked with Mr Brown — rather than with Mr Blair — is also highlighted in the biography, due to be published next month.

Commenting on the selection of Yvette Cooper — partner of Mr Brown's economics adviser, Ed Balls — for the safe seat of Pontefract and Castleford, in preference to Mr Blair's economics adviser, Derek Scott, the author comments: "Being close to Gordon Brown was clearly less of an impediment in traditionalist circles than proximity to the leader himself."

The Chancellor's various spats and rivalries with other ministers are recounted.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook is described as a man who would "cross the road to have a fight with Brown" and John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, is said to have been "sniping" at the future Chancellor in a political turf war.

Senior Labour figures yesterday expressed bemusement as to why the Chancellor and his "camp" had co-operated with the book. "Having lost the last leadership election," one said, "they show every sign of preparing for the next one."

Letters, page 8

# expolangues

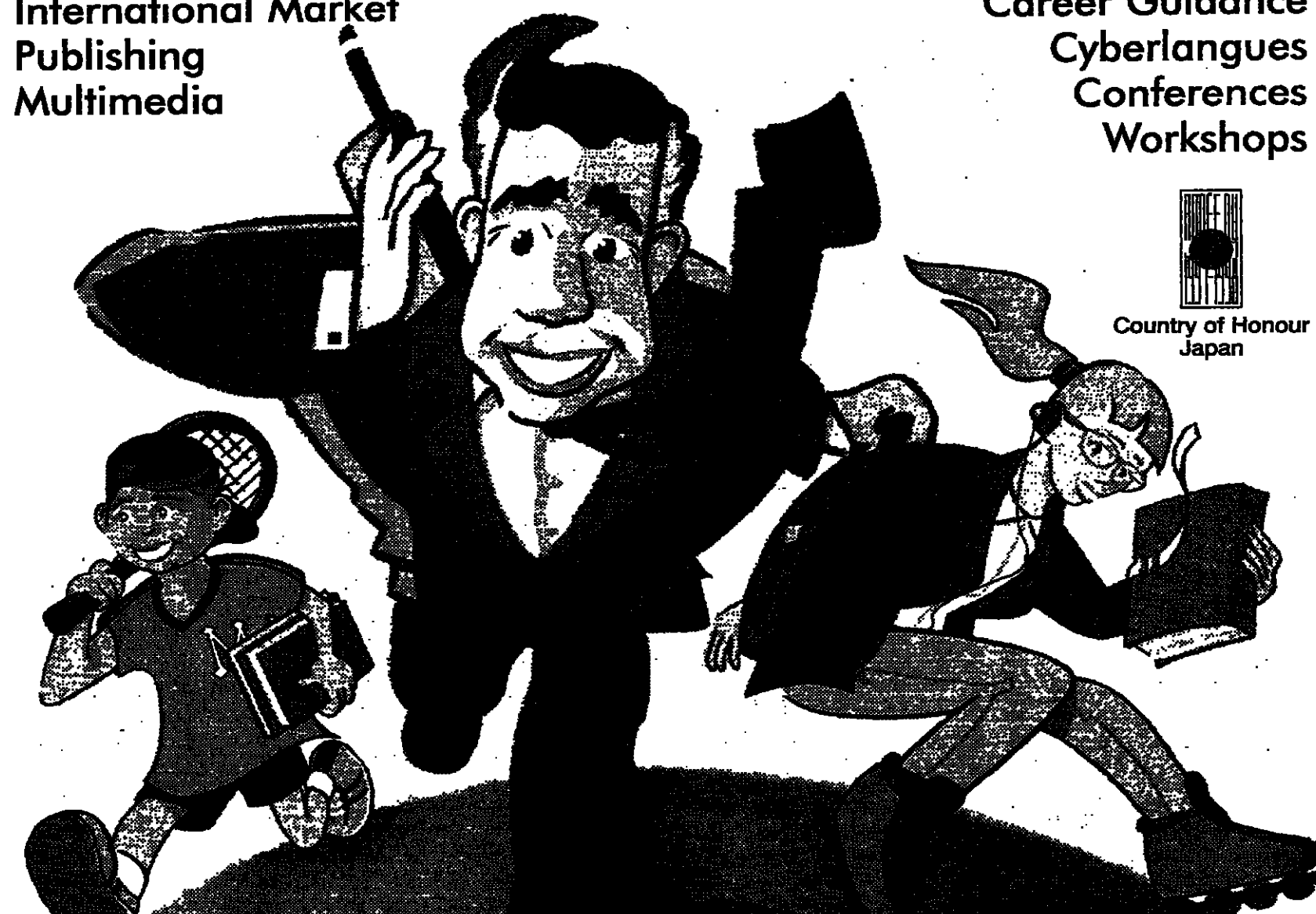
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## Refugee furor

## Dark side of Schengen exposed

Martin Walker in Brussels

**A** DRAMATIC extension of European security controls, with mandatory fingerprinting of foreigners with incomplete documents, is being hurried into place after the furor provoked by the arrival of some 1,200 Kurdish refugees.

Civil liberties groups warn that "a hyped-up moral panic" is being used to rush into force a draconian new system of controls. It will include trans-European data bases and wide authority for police to make arrests and engage in hot pursuit across national borders. But there will be little provision for legal appeal or democratic accountability.

The Kurdish crisis has begun to force countries with liberal asylum regimes, like Italy, to conform to the tighter rules of other EU countries like Germany. Under the new system, a Kurdish refugee who lacks Iraqi or Turkish papers or an EU visa — all of which might be impossible to obtain — could face instant fingerprinting, detention and deportation without appeal.

In one case, which has aroused concern in the German press, a Kurdish refugee was taken back to Turkey with all his documents by German police. There, he was instantly arrested, tortured and sentenced to prison for having documents from the PKK Kurdish separatist

group. "Illegal" migrants to Germany are now also charged between £21 and £40 for each hour of police time spent on them.

Under pressure from Germany, Austria and France, Italy this week agreed to abolish its 15-day grace period before a refugee denied admission must leave the country. The country now seems resigned to building detention centres to hold refugees pending deportation.

The dark side of the Schengen pact, under which Europe's internal borders and passport controls are being scrapped, is becoming evident.

The only measure of democratic accountability in the Schengen system — a joint control board made up of parliamentarians from Schengen countries — has itself complained that it is not being given the information it needs to fulfil its duty of oversight. Board members have protested to the Danish parliament that they were refused access to the Schengen control centre in Strasbourg.

Although refusing to join the Schengen system of open borders between EU countries, Britain has said it wants to participate in Schengen's information system. This is a data base which contains about 8 million names of criminals, suspected terrorists and drug smugglers — and illegal migrants.

Amnesty International and the United Nations High Commission for refugees have al-



Italian carabinieri and border police check a coastal cave near Otranto yesterday morning looking for clandestine immigrants. PHOTOGRAPH BY PAOLO ONO

ready voiced concern at the much tougher asylum system emerging in Europe. They have complained that the EU's protocol on asylum for EU citizens violates the Geneva Convention on Refugees. The protocol defines all EU

states as "safe countries", meaning that any asylum application by an EU citizen will be automatically rejected by another EU country as manifestly unfounded. The Schengen executive committee has approved a

series of measures designed to tighten controls at all EU external borders. These include fingerprinting foreigners whose identity cannot be established with certainty on the basis of valid documents, and sharing the fingerprints

and details with all EU police forces as soon as technical systems permit. The committee has also agreed that member states should "prevent foreign nationals having entered illegally on to the Schengen terri-

tory and whose identity is uncertain from disappearing into clandestinity". This means some kind of detention system, and EU officials said this week that funds could be made available for "refugee reception centres".

## Turkey spurns protocol

**T**URKEY, still smarting over its rejection by the European Union yesterday denied signing up with Western European countries to a joint campaign against migrant trafficking, *writes John Hooper in Rome.*

An Italian government statement after Thursday's police chiefs' summit in Rome appeared to commit all seven countries at the meeting to a set of common aims.

But it did not mention that the protocol drawn up by participants had not been signed by Turkey's police chief, Nejat Bilgin.

The Anatolian News Agency reported yesterday that he had voiced two objections to the agreement. He had opposed references to the "situation of the Kurdish immigrants in Turkey" and the "Kurdish Turkish regions". He had also protested at the meeting's refusal to recognise the role played in the trafficking by the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The meeting, called after the arrival in Italy last week of more than 1,200 Kurds, brought together police officers and security officials from Turkey, Greece, Italy, France, Germany, Holland and Belgium. Britain, which is not a member of the Schengen agreement on open frontiers, sent a diplomatic observer.

## Russia's economic woes outweigh the universe

James Meek in Moscow

**T**HE Russian government has a choice: find out how the universe will end, billions of years from now, or cash a cheque for a few million roubles today. To the fury of Nobel prize-winning United States scientists, it seems the fate of the universe has been put on hold.

Russia's bureaucrats plan to get the money by selling off several tonnes of a rare metal, gallium, from a stockpile used in a Russian-American experiment to measure the mass of an elusive sub-atomic particle, the neutrino.

Scientists believe the mass of neutrinos — if they have any — may account for the universe's mysterious "dark matter". If the particle could be weighed, they could predict whether the universe will expand

forever or scrunch together into itself in a reverse replay of the Big Bang.

For Russia's ministers, the expansion and contraction of the Russian economy is of more immediate concern — a realm in which spare roubles are as hard to track down as neutrinos. But, in trying to satisfy the IMF, they have fallen foul of another US-based institution, the Los Alamos laboratory, where many of the American collaborators in the project are based.

Yesterday Izvestiya published details of a letter sent to the Russian prime minister, Victor Chernomyrdin, from 12 US winners of the Nobel Prize for Physics, complaining about the sell-off plan.

"The destruction of the experiment would mean the loss of a priceless source of knowledge for fundamental science," it said.

Last year the US and

France expressed formal concern at the gallium sell-off plans. France worried that the dumping on the world market of so much of the metal would damage the world's main producer, the French firm Rhone-Poulenc.

The US has invested more than \$5 million in the experiment, known as Sage, the Soviet-American gallium experiment.

Neutrinos can be detected only in deep mineshafts, and Sage is ideally located — 7,500 feet underground in the foothills of Mount Elbrus in the Caucasus.

Originally 60 tonnes of gallium, worth \$15 million, was rotated through the shaft to try to trap the neutrinos. But now Moscow has ordered scientists there to give up seven tonnes for sale to pay off regional energy debts. Officials say the experiment can continue with less gallium, but scientists disagree.

## Jobless reject Jospin's emergency fund

Paul Webster in Paris

**F**RANCE'S increasingly militant unemployed threw out a fresh challenge to the government yesterday when an offer by the prime minister, Lionel Jospin, of more than \$100 million in emergency unemployment benefits was rejected by jobseekers' representatives.

Another national day of street marches for the unemployed was called for Tuesday. In a belated attempt to win back the credibility of his

Socialist-led government, after three weeks of demonstrations by jobseekers, Mr Jospin had announced an emergency fund to help the long-term unemployed.

The offer followed a move by riot police into several of the 30 welfare centres occupied by demonstrators claiming payments of about £200 each to cover end-of-year bills. At other centres, mainly in Marseille, demonstrators dispersed before police could act, but four protest organisations, claiming that government action was insufficient,

said they would continue their sit-ins.

Mr Jospin was forced into a hurried decision after nationwide marches this week followed sit-ins at unemployment offices. Most of the marchers receive benefits averaging only £400 a month because they have been out of work for more than a year.

Of France's 3.1 million jobless, about 1.1 million are long-term unemployed. There were fears of further discontent after Communist, Green and Socialist members of the governing coalition expressed

sympathy for the demonstration and criticised the labour minister, Martine Aubry, for failing to respond quickly.

Mr Jospin made his offer after meeting trade unions, employers and representatives of jobless workers' organisations on Thursday. It was the first time that the unemployed had been consulted.

The prime minister acknowledged "the disarray and profound distress" of the long-term unemployed, but said he would not approve any inflationary measures that would overturn France's

present economic policy. There was no detailed breakdown of how the extra £100 million would be shared out, but he said local councils would also hand out extra benefits, and the welfare system would be streamlined.

Mr Jospin promised an emergency review of social exclusion by March. The entire system of unemployment pay will also be reviewed. Leaving MPs, meanwhile, have rushed through measures to guarantee jobless people over the age of 60 a minimum of £200 a month.

## Hooded man returns head of the Little Mermaid

AP in Copenhagen

**T**HE head of the Little Mermaid statue was returned yesterday, three days after it was sawn off, by a hooded man who dropped it off at a television station.

The drop-off was filmed by a freelance cameraman who got an anonymous call before dawn on Tuesday to go to the park to see what had been done.

No arrests have been made. Police said they were examining the head for fingerprints and other clues, and planned to question the cameraman.

The cameraman said he hid in a garbage container near the TVDanmark studio to film the return of the bronze head after he got a second phone call from the anonymous person.

The statue, inspired by the Hans Christian Andersen tale, draws about a million visitors each year. It is cherished by Danes who see the mermaid as a national symbol comparable to the Eiffel Tower or Big Ben.

"That's great. We'll save lots of money," Copenhagen's city chief architect, Otto Kasmann, said yesterday. A new head would have cost as much as 80,000 kroner (around \$9,300).

The Little Mermaid, erected in 1913, has had its head sawn off once before, in 1964. No one was arrested for that vandalism, although several people including a radical artist have claimed responsibility. One of the statue's arms was cut off in 1983.

The original head was never found and was replaced with another modelled after the original.

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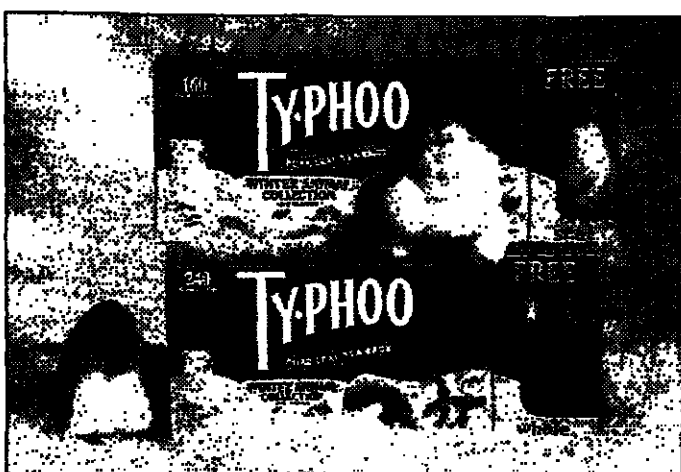
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Sir Michael Tippett

# Shaping the harmonies of our time

FOR a long time, Sir Michael Tippett, who has died aged 93, languished under the shadow of Benjamin Britten. Britten, eight years his junior, was a musical prodigy, lauded in his teens, widely appreciated after the success of his opera *Peter Grimes* in 1934, and remaining prolific and popular up to his death in 1976. By contrast, Tippett, a late developer, was a slow, deliberate composer who won acceptance gradually. International fame came only in his late sixties. What distinguished the rest of his career was a prolonged Indian summer: for Tippett continued to write major new pieces until he was almost 90, breaking new ground, moreover, with each one. Blessed with seemingly unremitting physical, creative and intellectual vitality, he became an almost legendary figure on the musical scene. His oratorio, *A Child of Our Time* (1938-41) — a moving assertion of humanitarianism in an epoch of catastrophe — acquired eventually the status of an icon.

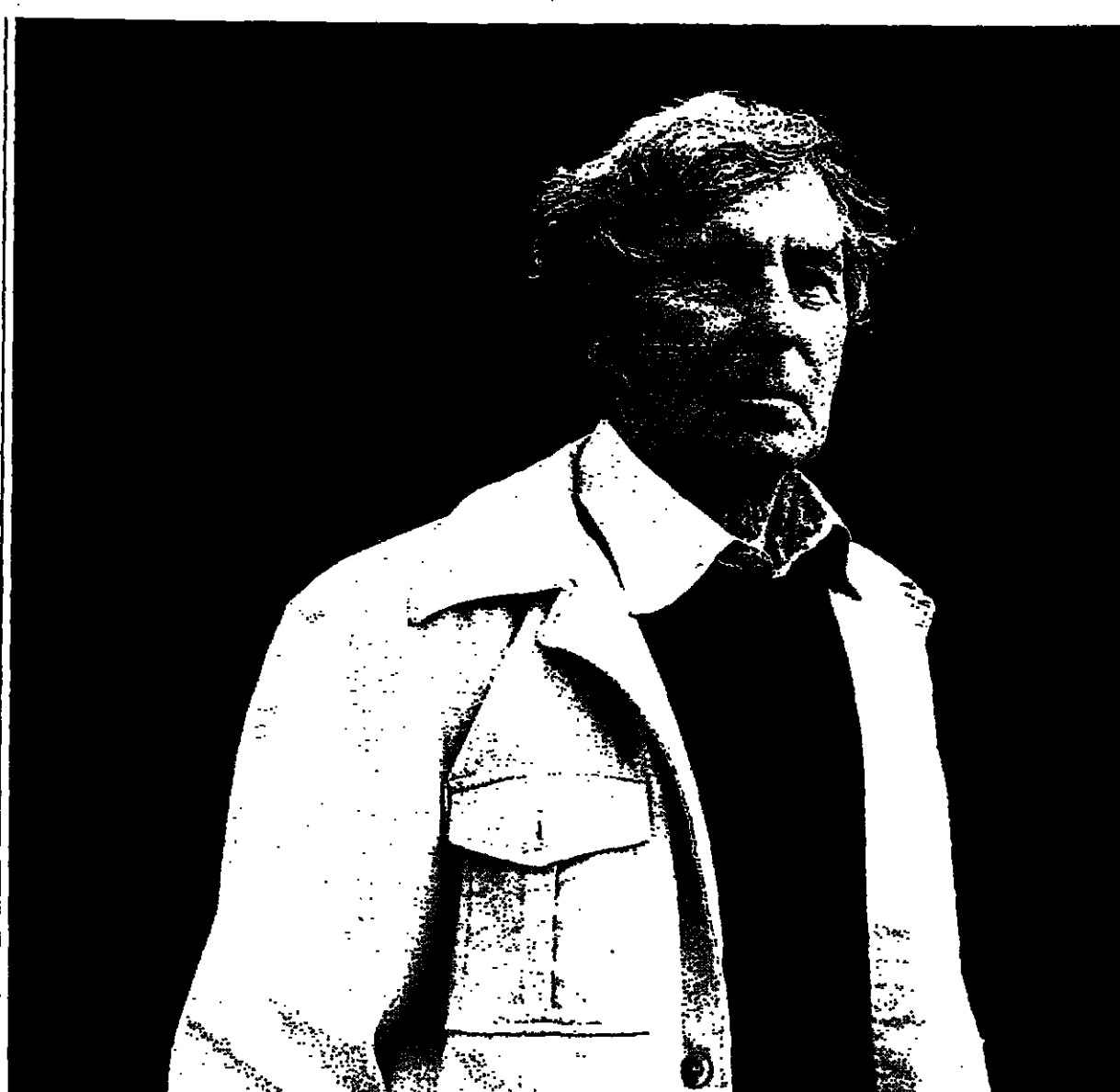
Throughout his long life, Tippett ran against the grain of received British opinion. He early concluded that music and the arts were fundamentally international and rejected (as did Britten) the then prevalent mode of nationalist folk-music-based composition championed by Vaughan Williams.

Tippett was a pluralist: a humanist who eschewed dogma; a socialist and pacifist; a Jungian who felt art was basically collective and archetypal; a visionary with a capacity to blend the most disparate ingredients. Beethoven, pre-classical counterpoint, jazz and gamelan music — within a single work, he it his exuberant *First Piano Sonata* (1936) or his bitter-sweet *Triple Concerto* (1979). Thus, his largest-scale work, notably, the five operas and three major choral works — were all attempts at creative synthesis at different points in his career. Preferring these summative pieces, or developing out of them, were Tippett's four symphonies, five string quartets, five piano sonatas, concertos, songs and numerous shorter instrumental and choral works. Taken as a whole, however, this oeuvre had a consistent and distinctively modern stamp.

Tippett wrote little that could be called "experimental". His friend and mentor, T.S. Eliot, said that for him, as a poet, "the words come last", likewise, with Tippett the notes came last. Following upon a lengthy period of gestation and structural planning, his sense of the line and shape of a piece was such that in his maturity he invariably wrote from beginning to end in sequence, sending each completed section to his publishers confident that there would be no need for significant revisions. Tippett's quirky, maverick musical personality sometimes distracted attention from his assured craftsmanship.

Tippett was a member of any artistic coterie, not the centre of one. He stood aside from trends and fashions. As a student, he was overpowered by the humanistic idealism of Beethoven's music and he took structural models from Beethoven's compositions throughout his career. A second strand in Tippett's musical make-up derived from his early discovery of polyphonic music, especially Elizabethan madrigals. A linear approach to composition became a distinctive trait in his work.

Although unsympathetic to nationalism, Tippett drew in all kinds of secular music, utilising it often to enrich his own style. The folk songs of his early (unpublished) ballad operas were later put to good use in his lively tongue-in-cheek *Suite for the Birthday of Prince Charles* (1948); in his fifth opera, *New Year* (1965-68), he embraced the sonorous and rhythms of jazz and reggae. His early encounter with jazz and blues, above all, convinced him that music retained a universal expressive potential, albeit tinged with irony. In his *Third* (and longest) *Symphony* (1972), Tippett polarised Beethoven and the blues: the work quotes the Ninth Symphony within a sequence of soaring vocal lines, sketching a journey from in-



Seer and dreamer... Tippett combined social concern and pacifism with a Jungian mysticism, all of which are reflected in his compositions

PHOTOGRAPH: NEIL LIBBERT

nocence to experience in a world of concentration camps and atom bombs. Tippett was born in London and grew up in Suffolk. His intellectuality was nurtured in early childhood by his highly articulate, well-read (and equally long-lived) parents. From his lawyer father, Tippett inherited a fascination with languages. As a child, he quickly became fluent in French and taught himself Italian and German as a student. From his mother — a nurse, active Labour Party member and a suffragette (for which she was imprisoned) — he derived notions of collective social responsibility, humane values and ultimately pacifism. Tippett's musical awareness, however, was negligible until his teens.

He was a visionary with a capacity to blend Beethoven, jazz, and gamelan music within a single work

He was sent to board at Fettes School, Edinburgh, where he led a successful crusade against bullying, then to Stamford Grammar School, holidaying in Germany in the 1920s, he observed the "progressive" methods of schools for destitute children; decades later, this experience was re-awakened when he came to write his opera *New Year*, in whose plot the problems of orphaned, uprooted young people are in the foreground.

His parents found incomprehensible his determination to become a composer. prompted by a concert he attended in Leicester conducted by Malcolm Sargent. Having persuaded them to support him at the Royal College of Music, however, Tippett came to London in the summer of 1923. But he lacked the fluency and versatility of his fellow-students and his teachers, who included Sargent and Adrian Boult, often despaired.

Tippett got his degree at the second attempt and then left London for the country to have peace to compose. This became a rule thereafter, despite the public appearances and jet-setting of later years.

Conducting the Oxted and Limpsfield Players in Surrey, and teaching French at Hazelwood Preparatory School, where he met and worked

with Christopher Fry on school operas and plays, Tippett accumulated enough compositions for a concert at the Barn Theatre, Oxted, in 1930. But this only convinced him that he needed more training in order to exorcise other composers' influences and discover his own voice. So he undertook a further 18 months' tuition with the noted counterpoint expert, R.O. Morris. The rigorous discipline this entailed and a first, passionate love-affair, combined to draw from him the first work he would later regard as entirely his own — *String Quartet No 1* (1934).

During the Depression, Tippett worked among the unemployed in the north of England, galvanising a mixture of out-of-work miners and their families, students and friends for performances of *The Beggar's Opera* and a specially composed ballad opera, *Robin Hood*. Subsequently, he conducted a London orchestra formed mainly from his friends and colleagues, made redundant by the talks. They raised money for the needy and appeared at Labour Party rallies.

The climax of Tippett's early-musical commitment, which had included brief membership of the Communist party — came in July 1943, when he served a three-month sentence at Wormwood Scrubs for failing to comply with the conditions of service as a conscientious objector. This, in his mother's view, was his finest hour. Over the years, Tippett became one of the foremost leaders of the British pacifist movement — president of the Peace Pledge Union and a CND supporter. His identification with human rights causes in general was ultimately crystallised in the rhetorical cry of the Present: "One humanity, one justice," at the end of *New Year*.

As a student, Tippett accepted his homosexual leanings without qualm. By this time, his family life had disintegrated. His parents were unable, during the first world war, to draw upon the revenue from the hotel his father owned in Games — went to live on the continent and his elder brother, Peter, went into the Navy. Thereafter, Tippett yearned for the warmth he observed within the families of working-class friends. With his charm, charisma and good looks, Tippett attracted many female admirers. Two became very close friends: Evelyn Maude, an older married woman and a regular source of wise counsel (in prison, allowed to

write letters to only one person, Tippett chose her); and Francesca Allinson, a choral conductor, folk-song researcher and puppeteer, with whom he considered starting a family. The latter's suicide in 1944 prompted one of Tippett's most poignant compositions, the long-cycle *The Heart's Assurance*.

Tippett's lifetime through this tangled web of personal relationships and the difficulties caused by his devotion to creative work was the writings of Jung. Briefly he underwent Jungian analysis and continued analysing all his dreams for about nine months. Just before the outbreak of war in 1939, with a dream of death by strangulation, he thought the analysis had achieved its goal.

Few of Tippett's close relationships survived his ruthless creative obsession: one of the longest lasting, with painter Karl Hawker, ended with a contrived separation and the latter's suicide.

Tippett's personal turmoil coincided with the rise of Nazism in Central Europe and Stalinism in the Soviet Union. Following Jung, he interpreted the violence of the period and the war that followed as projections of one society's "shadow" on to another: a view he held to, later, in the context of the Cold War. Tippett identified strongly with those made scapegoats by intolerance and self-righteousness. That was the inspiration underlying his oratorio, *A Child of Our Time*, which had begun as an opera about the Easter Uprising in Ireland, but gelled as a protest against the 1938 Kristallnacht in Nazi Germany. Tippett asked Eliot — whom he had recently met — to

write the text but Eliot, having looked at Tippett's draft libretto, advised him to construct his own text in full, as the poet's literary flights might conflict with the composer's musical concepts. After that, Tippett always fashioned his own libretti.

Aiming for directness and lucidity in *A Child of Our Time*, Tippett took Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Passions* as his main models. Clinching the emotional impact of the work at five key stages, he incorporated negro spirituals (replacing the Lutheran chorales Bach would have used); and this proved a brilliant play, helping to give the work great expressive breadth.

At its premiere in 1944, *A Child of Our Time* was understood primarily as a response to the Nazi persecution of the Jews. But its message — summed up in the final ensemble in characteristically Jungian language: "I would know my shadow and my light/So shall I at last be whole" — suits all situations where intolerance has thrown up victims and outcasts. *A Child of Our Time* was the first work of Tippett's to be heard outside the UK: now it is constantly performed worldwide.

The oratorio's success in the mid-1940s helped Tippett's reputation to prosper. Meanwhile, he was attracting attention by making Morley College — whose musical director he had become in 1941 — the most lively concert-giving organisation in wartime London. The Morley College Choir was broadcast by the BBC and (under Tippett) made a historic recording of Tallis's do-part motet *Sperem* for EMI. During Tippett's period at Morley, the Amadeus Quartet was formed and the counter tenor Alfred Deller emerged from obscurity.

The path to the international fame Tippett enjoyed in his late years was fraught with difficulties. As well as *The Midsummer Marriage* a number of Tippett's compositions in the 1950s had troublesome premieres. His *Piano Concerto* was rejected as unplayable by its designated soloist, Julius Katchen; his *Second Symphony* broke down under Boult; and the *Fantasia*

instigating a Purcell revival, Tippett found kindred spirits in Britten and Pears, who had just returned from the US. They premiered Tippett's cantata, *Boyhood's End* (1948) and participated in other Morley concerts.

After the war, Tippett's priority was his first opera, *The Midsummer Marriage*, which absorbed his energies completely for six years (1946-52). Gradually relinquishing his Morley College duties, he finally resigned in 1951.

What, unexpectedly (for he had no commission to write it), the opera was premiered at Covent Garden in 1955, audiences and critics, though baffled by the libretto, were bowled over by the score's unfettered lyrical ardour and dramatic intensity. Tippett's *Midsummer Marriage* with a cast that included the young Janet Baker as Sostrenia. A new production at Covent Garden followed in 1966 with Colin Davis as conductor, leading eventually to a best-selling recording. There have since been more than a dozen productions at home and abroad, all of which have attracted varying mixtures of praise, scepticism and scorn.

The main glibes against Tippett's operas have always been directed at the libretto — quirky, magpie-like mixtures of references and quotations (emulating *The Waste Land*) — despite the composer's insistence that they were meant to be read as "literature", but as "gestures for music". Tippett brought to the opera house something of the innovative zeal associated with contemporary playwrights and novelists. All his operas are studies in the nuances of human behaviour: there are never any standard heroes and villains, rarely a straightforward story-line. The masque-like interaction of mortals and immortals in *The Midsummer Marriage* is continued in different ways in Tippett's subsequent operas. Techniques absorbed from television and film helped Tippett control the pace and focus of this multi-level, cross-cutting between the actual, the imaginary and the symbolic.

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*Concertante on a Theme of Corelli* was dismissed as cerebral by Malcolm Sargent (now there are 14 recordings of it). Eventually Tippett was to find more sympathetic interpreters — conductors such as Colin Davis, David Atherton, Andrew Davis and, among the most recent generation, Paul Daniel; his piano sonatas were championed by Paul Crossley (who premiered the third and fourth and recorded them all); the Lindsay Quartet proved staunch advocates of his string quartets.

It was a brilliant production by Sam Wanamaker at the 1962 Coventry Festival of Tippett's second opera, the epic-style *King Priam*, that began to turn the tide in his favour, though its abrasive Brechtian dramaturgy and

Tippett drew strength from a sense of belonging to a tradition, age-old and ever present

mosaic orchestration initially disconcerted those won over by the lyrical effluence of *The Midsummer Marriage*.

In the mid-1960s, Tippett inherited the Bath Festival from Yehudi Menuhin, saved it from bankruptcy and widened its scope and audience appeal. Honours began to flow in: a CBE in 1959, and knighthood in 1966; he was made a Companion of Honour in 1979 and received the Order of Merit in 1984. He valued most of all the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society (1975) and awards such as that of the Association of British Orchestras (1986) which, he felt, came from "my colleagues in the profession".

Tippett was always strongly committed to musical education and his stint as guest conductor with Leicester-shire Schools Symphony Orchestra (1965-70) proved exemplary. Right into his eighties, he conducted or attended concerts by other youth orchestras. An extension of this was the setting up of Tippett's own charitable foundation — to support education projects and contemporary music tours — in 1979, funded then and after from the sale of his musical manuscripts to the British Library.

Tippett's first visit to the US in 1965 as composer-in-residence at the Aspen Festival, Colorado was a major turning-point. He fell in love with the landscapes of the Far West and identified with the polyglot culture of the cities. America also took to Tippett in a big way. American commissions followed: the *Fourth Symphony* (1977) and *Byzantium* (1989) were premiered by Georg Solti and the Chicago Symphony; *The Mask of Time* was premiered by Colin Davis in Boston; and Boston, together with the Toronto and London symphony orchestras, jointly commissioned *The Rose Lake* (1983), while Houston Opera, Glyndebourne and the BBC, commissioned *New Year*.

Tippett's success in America led to numerous invitations elsewhere, and in his seventies and eighties he undertook three world tours, conducting and attending festivals of his music all over the Far East, Australia and Brazil. Belatedly, his music began to attract real attention in Europe. All this activity provided him with opportunities for exotic holidays; and right to the end, his delight in exploration and adventure abroad remained insatiable. His travel stories, proving one of the great attractions of his autobiography, *Those Twentieth Century Blues* (1991).

Tippett's "discovery" of what he called a "Newfoundland of the spirit" in America also permeated his music from the mid-1960s onwards. Immediately, his third opera, *The Knot Garden* (1970), uncovered a new toughness and irony in his music: its harmonic character bluesy, its orchestration coloured by electric guitar sonorities. The scores and libretti of *The Ice Break* (1977) and *New Year* went even further. All three operas are explicitly about people of today, grappling with contemporary problems and leaving at the end to begin new lives. There are parallels to these operatic endings in those of Tippett's abstract works, in which he eschewed bombastic perorations, instead favouring throwaway gestures.

Tippett was a mixture of seer and dreamer. Both are encountered in the two great choral compositions of his mature years, in which he eschewed bombastic perorations, instead favouring throwaway gestures. *The Mask of Time* (1983). The former brings to the fore Tippett's fascination with concepts of time — above all, with the possibility that art is concerned with a virtual time-continuum: detached from everyday clock-time. Setting Latin texts from Augustine's *Confessions*, Tippett produced a typically unclassifiable work, whose themes meshed with complete organic freedom and inward momentum.

*The Mask of Time* was even more ambitious, a musician's answer to the scientific account of the development of civilisation in C.P. Snow's celebrated BBC series, *The Ascent of Man* (1973). An awesome conception, its 10 movements, lasting altogether 86 minutes, depict, in broad chronological leaps, the evolution of the universe and mankind's constant defiance of destructive forces ending with a wordless song of survival and hope.

Observing often — notably in his first volume of essays, *Moving into Aquarius* (1988) — that the artist is relatively powerless in a society that invests the greater part of its resources in technology, Tippett drew strength from a sense of belonging to a tradition, age-old and ever-present, which is the wrote, memorably "to create images from the depths of the imagination, and to give them form whether visual, intellectual or musical... Images are the past, shapes of the future, images of vigour for a decadent period, images of calm for one too violent. Images of reconciliation for worlds torn by division. And in an age of mediocrity and shattered dreams, images of abounding, generous, exuberant beauty."

Tippett's integrity as an artist and his humanitarian commitment made him one of the most esteemed figures in present-day culture. His absence from the musical scene leaves behind, in consequence, not merely an artistic vacuum but a moral and spiritual one as well.

Michael Bowen

Michael Kamp Tippett, composer, born January 2, 1906; died January 8, 1998

## Weekend Birthdays

NOT MANY journalists can match the achievement of Marjorie Wallace, 53 today, in building a multi-million pound charity on the back of a newspaper investigation. But after months of heart-rending interviews with victims of the drug Thalidomide, she turned her fury at the plight of disabled people and their families into setting up the schizophrenia charity, Sane. As its chief executive,



she advocates the contentious view that closing mental hospitals is short-sighted and that families need a break from the stress of (inadequate) care in the community. Born in Karen Blixen's house in Kenya, Wallace broke into the media as David Frost's researcher. She spent 17 years at the *Sunday Times*, producing a stream of articles, books and plays on thalidomide and other disabilities. She can often still be found sleeping rough on the streets, gathering information

on what she describes as the life of a war correspondent in her own country.

Today's other birthdays: Sir Walter Bodmer, FRS, geneticist, 62; Tom Clarke, Labour MP, 57; Sir Arthur Gold, president, Amateur Athletic Association, 51; Sir Derek Horaby, chairman, London and Continental Railways, 68; Clive Jones, chief executive, Carlton Television, 45; Max Roach, jazz drummer, composer, 71; Tony Soper, natural history film director, 59;

Rod Stewart, rock singer, 53; Valerie Strachan, chairman, HM Customs and Excise, 58.

Tomorrow's birthdays: Graham Allen, Labour MP, 45; Sir Alan Bowness, director, Henry Moore Foundation, 70; Anna Calder-Marshall, actress, 51; Brian Moore, rugby player, 36; Sir Alastair Morton, former chairman, Euro-tunnel, 60; Bryan Robson, former England footballer, 41; Arthur Scargill, president, NUM, 60; John Sessions, actor and comedian, 45.

## Death Notices

HARTLEY, Elizabeth Mary MBE PhD, Teacher, Genealogist and loyal friend, of Cambridge and Glens died on 5th January 1998. Funeral services to be held at the Cambridge Crematorium at 2.30 pm on Wednesday, 14th January 1998. Family flowers only please.

OSBORNE, Orlean died at Athens on the 29th December. He was buried there at The First Cemetery on the 27th December

## In Memoriam

WANN, Ernest Grenville, on January 8th 1998, in Devon, aged 85. He was born in 1912 and was a member of the Royal Society. He was a former Principal Lecturer at the Devon Technical College, Exeter, and was a member of the Exeter and Devon County Council. He was a member of the Exeter and Devon County Council. He was a member of the Exeter and Devon County Council.

OSBORNE, Orlean died at Athens on the 29th December. He was buried there at The First Cemetery on the 27th December

## Engagements

GARDINER/WALSH, Professor and Mrs Brian Gardner of Leamington announce the engagement of their daughter Claire to Paul, eldest son of Mr & Mrs Joseph Walsh of Liverpool.



## Finding hope in the Maze

But where are the people?

MO MOWLAM deserves a loud, hopeful cheer of congratulation. She took a massive gamble and last night it seemed to have paid off. With little regard for precedent, the secretary of state walked into the Maze jail — home to some of the toughest men in Europe — sat down with convicted bombers and murderers, including one who rejoices in the cuddly nickname "Mad Dog," and dared speak of peace. Her powers of persuasion seem to have moved the hardmen. Once she was gone, the Ulster Freedom Fighters' 130 prisoners debated the situation, staged another one of their unsettlingly democratic ballots — and voted to support the peace process they had condemned at the start of the week. In so doing, the UFF have not only removed the earlier threat to the three-year loyalist ceasefire, which had seemed to hang by a thread — they have also allowed their political leaders to return to the Stormont table on Monday, as planned. The peace process, once on the brink of collapse, appears to be back in business.

Dr Mowlam's hour-long meeting with the five leaders of the UFF Maze Battalion could easily have been a disaster. She might have played the ultimate card — offering a face-to-face meeting with the British Government, with all the legitimacy that that implies — only to be rebuffed. If that had happened, she would today stand accused of humiliation in the pursuit of appeasement. But that was not the outcome. Instead Dr Mowlam emerged from an extraordinary morning with the tentative blessing of the UFF, as well as words of encouragement from their loyalist comrades in the Ulster Volunteer Force — and even from the IRA's prisoners in the H-Block next door. Both groups got a drop-by encounter with Dr Mo, rather than a full session. "Keep going," they told her.

Despite the success yesterday some will still feel uncomfortable with the whole episode, much as they might have squirmed at the TV pictures of the Maze men posing in jail with their murals and tattoos, happily chatting to reporters like pressure group activists rather than cold-blooded killers. Many have wondered why Dr Mo went to such lengths to get their approval: how dare the men of violence be rewarded with power of veto over the entire political process? The answer is harsh but simple: because this is not the ideal world, but the real one. Of course, in an ideal world John Hume and David Trimble would sit down together as the leaders of mainstream nationalism and unionism respectively, thrash out an agreement and that would be that — with or without the approval of the paramilitaries. In the real world, such a "deal" would be all but worthless — because terrorists from both sides would simply keep on killing. This is a peace process because it's about ending a war — and that takes the approval of the "armies" on both sides. It's an ugly truth, but war is an ugly business. Mo Mowlam's action yesterday was proof, though none was needed, that she understands her task is not to grapple with a polite dispute over, say, tax or a government budget: this is about life and death. The gunmen have to be in the process; otherwise the whole thing is a sham. Her hint of early release for terrorist prisoners, in the context of an overall settlement, should be seen the same way. What war has not ended without the release of blood-stained killers from the other side?

And yet while the gunmen have made good on their demand for a role in the talks process, one player is conspicuously quiet. The people of Northern Ireland — the men and women invoked by both sides as the ultimate arbiters — have remained curiously silent throughout. There have been no urgent demonstrations, no sudden gestures of people power — no coming together of ordinary citizens to demand their leaders drop this week's threats and get back round the table. This might be a good thing: rather than loudly condemning Dr Mowlam and Mr Trimble for talking to terrorists, maybe people were quietly keeping their fingers crossed, hoping for the best. But the producers of BBC Radio Ulster's daily Talkback phone-in programme, often a virtual alternative version of the peace talks, report no jamming of their switchboard — just a strong sense of "ennui" among their listeners, even "despondency." This is sad news. The people of Northern Ireland need to leave their leaders in no doubt they want peace and they will not tolerate anybody who destroys this, their best chance to get it.

## Music for posterity

Sir Michael's work will long be revered

HE WAS ILL before Christmas — at 83, he was, characteristically, over in Sweden attending a festival of his work — yet news of the death of Sir Michael Tippett still came yesterday as a shock: he had seemed, for so long, so indestructible. The visit to Sweden was just one of uncountable instances where Tippett refused to make concessions to passing years. He celebrated his 90th birthday with a tour of the United States. And he would not allow his great age to deter him from writing. It's probably an idle temptation, though one rarely resisted on these occasions, to try to allot him a place in the pantheon of 20th century British composers. Idle because the ratings the world gives composers often change, sometimes drastically, after their deaths; idle too because private taste and private response has so powerful an influence on the way that audiences assess contemporary music. But the final judgment is likely to be that few were greater. Some of the music — the Concerto for Double Orchestra, for instance — was immediately accessible to all those with the ears and the hearts to absorb it. Other works were adjudged more "difficult" — too difficult, in some cases, for soloists and orchestras, though not nearly so difficult later, in the hands of more gifted conductors than Sargent or Boult.

Tippett was also, though without ostentation, a great public man. His mother went to prison for her suffragette views. While others then more famous fled during the second world war to America, Tippett remained in Britain, as a conscientious objector, and went to jail too, for refusing to conform to the terms which were set for conscientious objection. He championed pacifist causes and marched for nuclear disarmament. His appearances at great musical occasions were greeted with adulation, not least from the young, to whom he always responded so warmly and easily. Sir Michael died full of honours and full of years, leaving behind him music destined to stay in the repertoire as long as classical music survives.

## Letters to the Editor

Cleaning up our act

NOW we are reforming the arcane ceremonial rituals of Parliament (State pomp to be stripped of the "ridiculous," January 9) form should follow function. We could perhaps abandon the vestiges of government by aristocracy, which require the monarch to open Parliament in the House of Lords. Let's end the farce whereby the elected representatives of the people scuttle in to the opening ceremony only to find there is a standing order for a small minority.

The head of state should open Parliament by announcing the legislative programme to both Houses in Westminster Hall, which has more space. Let's also find ways of expressing our need for ceremony in terms other than coronets, ermine cloaks and men in wigs walking backwards.

4 Sibella Road,  
 London SW4 6EX.

IT is strange that the Home Office should conclude that there is "no evidence" to link the watching of violent film and video images with subsequent behaviour (Report, January 9). It is true that its own study is weak in its conclusions, chiefly because its subjects were shown obscure videos which were not part of mainstream popular culture.

Our study found children who repeatedly watched the same violent film and video on an 18-rated film and who thought it "would be really cool to pull the trigger on someone." The 1994 study by the Professional Association of Teachers found hundreds of school staff citing the influence of popular film/video on pupils. The most important conclusion from these studies was to identify the encouragement given by film and video images to a children's culture which neglects the victim and celebrates power, violence and control over others. This is what should be investigated by the Home Office.

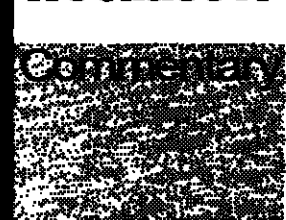
SURELY the most intriguing aspect of Dr Seed's plan to commence cloning human beings (San on human cloning urged, January 8) is that, for a large majority of cases, the "parent" will be infertile for genetic reasons. The "children" will be genetically identical to the parents and will likewise be infertile. The only way these "products" will be able to reproduce will be through cloning. Not only is this "making a market" as he goes along, he's making his next customers.

Collin Burke,  
 39 Heaton Road,  
 Manchester M20 4PU.

## Report tackles humanity's greatest task

# To prevent war

Martin Woollacott



Commentary

THE philanthropist Andrew Carnegie held that great fortunes are also great blessings to the community, because great things can be done with them. His own fortune he deployed in many ways, in libraries, concert halls, and parks, but also, and notably, in the service of peace. He endowed foundations, established peace palaces, and made proposals for international courts and an international police force. One of the early fruits of this investment was a report by an International Commission on the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, a book whose lessons went unheeded when all Europe went to war in 1914.

Yet that report can be read today as a primer on the ethnic fighting that burst out in south-eastern Europe in the nineties, as well as in Rwanda, Somalia and other places. The evidence from captured personal letters, assembled in the appendices of the book, tells us the Brethren story 80 years before it happened. Here is an example, as it hap-

pened from a Greek soldier, about victims who were Bulgarians, which, in its terrible mixture of the familial and the ferocious, is the future foretold. "My Dear Cousin, here we are burning villages and killing Bulgarians, women and children. Let me tell you, too, that cousin G Kirizlia has a slight wound in his foot and that all the rest of us, friends and relations, are very well, including our son-in-law, Yanl. With a hearty hug, Anastase Ath. Patros." It is the hug that chills the bone.

Now a new Carnegie Commission has reported, not solely on the more modern Balkan wars, but on the whole problem of trying to prevent "deadly conflict" in that post-Berlin Wall era in which four million people have already been killed. The report has not had, like its predecessor, to assemble evidence of atrocities. They are well enough known. Instead, it has tried to draw out of the experience of Bosnia and Rwanda, and many other recent conflicts, a programme for prevention. It aims to promote a "culture of prevention", and to provide "a vision of a worldwide system of conflict prevention".

It argues that the best preventive measure is to ensure that states are healthy, offering security, well-being and justice to their peoples. Where they do not, and where deadly conflict becomes a real possibility, the outside world should act quickly, ideally before serious fighting has begun, and with a balanced battery of diplomatic, political, economic, and military

measures. It makes some sharp specific points, for instance, that severing diplomatic relations is almost always a bad idea, that sanctions should be applied swiftly and comprehensively, that major NGOs should have regular meetings to identify countries and zones where deadly conflict threatens, and that big-business corporations should recognise a responsibility for dealing with conflict situations in countries where they operate.

If you are yawning, stop. It is true that there is, in this report, little that is absolutely new, few ideas that have not already been canvassed, and not a great deal that is controversial. Yet a report of this nature is not a fashion show, striving to be different from its rivals. This Carnegie commission of solutions is particularly well-organised and comprehensive, investigating the responsibility for avoiding conflict across the whole spectrum of national governments, international institutions, voluntary organisations, and commercial firms. It is important because the prestige and weight of Carnegie, and of the personalities it has brought into its work, ought to play its part in the necessary domestication of ideas which, once embedded in the consciousness and expectations of ordinary citizens and of decision-makers, will lead to action.

This is one of the weightier, perhaps the weightiest, of a number of reports that ought to tend toward that result. But

and much evidence that they didn't. Further details can be gleaned from my biography of Kathleen, A Great Task of Happiness, Macmillan, 1996.

Even Roland Huntford, who first made the allegation, does not repeat it in the biography of Nansen which Thoreau was reviewing. It is unfair, unkind and untrue to call her faithless.

Louise Young,  
 42 Ethelton Road,  
 London W12 7BG.

Scott free

PAUL Theroux (Books, January 8) repeats a discredited canard when he says that Kathleen Scott, wife of Captain Scott, slept with Fridtjof Nansen while her husband was "pegging out" on his return journey from the South Pole. Though, five years after Scott's death, Nansen did propose to her, there is no evidence that they ever had sex,

sexual frustration, confinement to small cages and food and water deprivation are all well-documented aspects of other animal-based circuses. Undercover footage has revealed trainers of big cats beating them with axe handles and punching them in the face with closed fists.

Chippewas should hand over the animals to sanctuaries and allow them to live free from fear.

Andrew Butler,  
 People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals,  
 London SW16 3ZG.

Being beastly

WHAT drives elephants, tigers and other "circus animals" to attack their trainers (Top circus trainer attacked by tiger, January 8) is the fact that the methods of "taming" these animals, by instilling fear, drives many over the edge, like a battered wife. You have only to look at the tools of the trade — whips, bullhooks, chains, fire-sticks and electric shock prods — to see the inherent cruelty.

Beatings, social isolation,

## A nasty domestic secret

IN nine out of 10 cases of domestic violence in families, the children are in the same room or the next room. One in three children witnessing their mother being abused will try to protect her.

Women often blame themselves for their partner's violence. They fear losing their children, and will go to great lengths to conceal or minimise the violence. Last June, we produced guidance for welfare professionals to help provide a better understanding of what women and children may be suffering and to suggest ways of supporting them more effectively.

By helping professionals recognise domestic violence at an earlier stage, we will enable women and children to share these difficult problems and to seek the help they need. We must help women break free from a life of silence, shame and misplaced guilt in which domestic violence thrives.

Annie Mullins,  
 NCH Action for Children,  
 85 Highbury Park,  
 London N5 1UD.



## Falling out over the suburbs

PROFESSOR David Hall (Letters, January 9) thinks George Monbiot (Sprawling suburbia, January 7) overlooks the advantages of suburbia. Indeed, but awkward only for the professor. Building on brownfield land is expensive — because greenfield development is zero-rated for VAT. People do not like living at high densities, he claims — perhaps not in tower blocks, but the Ninety Brigade just love Georgian town houses.

It is all a matter of will-power. If local councils can stand up to government and the construction lobby, we can regenerate our cities, for that is where the traffic from Pro-

fessor Hall's proposed new towns will be headed. He advocates congestion and the vice of rural voyeurism: nice to look at, but not where we work or play.

If planners would build not stagnant, suburban, dormitory cul-de-sacs but proper, dense, connected streets for local workers, then we could revitalise our urban areas, villages and towns as well as cities. We must ask our politicians to take a bulldozer to the suburbs and, if necessary, the people who would build them again.

Richard Hadden,  
 Queen's College,  
 Cambridge CB3 9ET.

A Country Diary

MACHYNELLETH: I once wrote here that nothing would induce me to go on holiday to Italy as long as the killing of wild birds was so popular that it was legal for someone armed with a shot-gun to enter private property although anyone with binoculars could be forcibly thrown out. Predictably, I got a letter from a representative of Italian tourism assuring me that a growing interest in conservation would soon put things right. Years have passed since then, and while I don't doubt that bird-protection is making progress in Italy, the fact remains that there is still a

huge annual slaughter of song-birds, and the law still allows you to enter private property to shoot them. In Malta, I'm told, things are even worse. The number of migrant birds killed is estimated at six million a year. Now I hear that the Maltese are thinking of extending their shooting season so that more migrant raptors may be shot. No wonder Montagu's harriers have become so rare in northern Europe. If only we could claim that bird protection in Britain is all it should be. But I have my doubts when, at this time of year, I wake to the sound of guns being fired at wild ducks

on the nearby estuary, a national nature reserve with a wildfowling zone right in its heart. Could any situation be more farcical? People who oppose cruel sports protest endlessly against fox-hunting. Yet duck-shooting, which inflicts vast suffering on wild and beautiful birds, takes place with hardly a murmur of disapproval. This severely undermines our case as conservationists. As long as we go on cheerfully slaughtering our wigeon and one-tails, we have no right to tell the Italians they ought to cherish their nightingales!

WILLIAM CONDRY

Labour on the record

YOUR report (Labour expels rebel MEPs, January 9) fails to explain the reason for their expulsion. Ken Coates and Hugh Kerr wrote to the president of the European Parliament saying they intended to join the Green Group. They also let it be known that they intended to become Independent Labour MEPs.

To join another political organisation is an act of repudiation of membership of the Labour Party rendering both of them automatically ineligible to remain members of the party. These are the rules. They do not require a disciplinary hearing.

David Hill,  
 Chief Media Spokesperson,  
 The Labour Party,  
 London SW1P 4GT.

SEUMAS Milne claims that Paul Routledge's biography of Gordon Brown is authorised (How Blair broke secret pact, January 9). It is not and does not claim to be. Nor did Gordon Brown give any comments on the events highlighted by Mr Milne. I understand the book states that he has always refused to talk about these events.

Charlie Whelan,  
 Press Secretary to the Chancellor,  
 HM Treasury,  
 London SW1P 3AG.

CONTRARY to the impression given by Bernadette Cronin (Letters, January 7) I did ask Clifton girls' school to talk to me about why they think boys should continue to suffer discrimination, but they referred me to the Hackney press office.

Angela Phillips,  
 Goldsmiths College,  
 London SE14 6NW.

We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used. Please include a full address



# Saturday opinion

## Do it like she says

Mark Lawson



THE talk-show hostess Oprah Winfrey is being sued by a group of her nation's beef farmers. They allege that her remark during a discussion of the BSE crisis that she would personally never eat a hamburger again has been responsible for the collapse of their sales.

This is the second occasion on which Ms Winfrey has been revealed as the cat that America loves to copy. When she began, last year, to single out a book each month on her show in an attempt to "get America reading again", previously obscure novels and unread memoirs suddenly needed frequent emergency reprints. At one point, the New York Times bestseller lists were dominated by the presenter's recommendations.

This evidence of the extraordinary influence of one television celebrity's endorsements and warnings came in the week of the publication of the annual lists of the favourite names for British babies. The sudden emergence of "Brandon" as a popular moniker was solemnly attributed by many commentators to the "decision of the actress Pamela Lee Anderson to give the name to her son".

An America turning literature and vegetarianism into a television performance; school registers in the next millennium featuring an unexpected entry because a woman mainly famous for her bust-size struck a pin in her Naming Baby book at B. These stories raise intriguing questions about social influence.

The advertising industry has long believed in the

Street's Ken Barlow could not save Neil Hamilton in Tatton in 1997. Similarly, Neil Kinnock lost twice despite endorsement by the majority of the country's most popular television comedians, while Tony Blair—who kept his distance from Labour's grassroots tendency—succeeded triumphantly without such glamour hand-outs. These cases cast doubt on the power of star-example.

And yet what Winfrey has done for books and is accused of doing to cows cannot be ignored. She has long been regarded as hugely influential, but it was generally believed that her effect on the national psyche was in the realms of emotion. Her talk-show—which, as most now know, specialised in sexual and social confession—is often said to have encouraged that aspect of late-20th-century America which its admirers regard as emotional openness and its detractors as emotional incontinence. "The Oprah effect" has become international shorthand for hysterical self-expression.

Yet—while accepting that millions of Americans wished to imitate her television format—it seemed less likely that there was a widespread desire to be precisely like her: to read what she read, to eat what she ate. The idea that the single most influential figure in modern America would be a black woman went against all the assumptions of political analysts and advertising strategists about the suggestibility of the public.

Even with this powerful example of her persuasiveness, it seems hard to believe that the nation's Oprah-clones reveal a nation less racist and less sexist than was reckoned. Yet there is something about this woman that breeds wannabes.

British snobbery—of the kind which flinches from the soul-baring nature of her show—might argue that Americans are by nature more credulous and suggestive. The country is, after all, the natural home of the support group. Perhaps it is true that—particularly among viewers of afternoon television—there are an unusual number of people looking to be told what to do.

It's tempting to speculate, however, whether there is any figure in British public life who could create an imitation of the Oprah effect. Certainly, it is not the prime minister.

While Ms Winfrey's stray remark into a microphone is supposed to have stopped meat-eating, Tony Blair's declaration that he would personally never touch beef on the bear again has led to a vibrant market in black-market t-bone.

Similarly, Sir Cliff Richard's frequent endorsement of celibacy and vegetarianism has had no obvious effect on the popularity of either sex or hamburgers. Richard Branson comes top of all polls to find the nation's role models, but bearded and in knickerbockers he remains a minority fashion style for men. Finally, it has to be admitted that the single British passport holder who could tell people what to read or eat and succeed died last year in Paris and—crucially—could not have achieved this effect while alive.

Although Oprah Winfrey deals famously in groups—Men Who Sleep With Their Sisters-in-Law and so on—she seems, in this copycat effect, to be a one-off. Logically—at least according to the reasoning of politics—she should exploit this leverage over the American people by running for the White House.



## Who we are

Catherine Bennett



WHO we are. What we do. Where we live. These, Peter Mandelson has disclosed, are the themes which will make his Millennium Dome "a powerful statement to the rest of the world about Britain's new pride and self-confidence". Until recently, he was

loath to elaborate, other than to promise wonders on "an almost unimaginable scale". He feared the anticipation might be too much for us—there's not much point working people up into a premature frenzy of excitement.

But last week, in Disney World, Mandelson risked public delirium. Perhaps stung by the derisive journalists who accompanied him every-where, perhaps feeling an ambassador to Main Street, USA, that he should demonstrate some of Britain's bountiful new pride and self-confidence, he revealed that schemes for the inside of his Dome are far more advanced than had previously been alleged.

For instance, inside the Dome has been conceptualised as a "millennium deluge", with themed zones ar-

ranged around a "vast, striking" hole.

The three Ws—apparently representing Mr Mandelson's "own vision"—will each be sub-divided into three zones: "Who we Are", "Who we Body and Soul", "What we Do".

For simplicity, the plan can hardly be faulted. Some, however, unconvinced by Mandelson's assurances that the Dome Experience will be positively drenched in spirituality, feel that What we Believe deserves more than a segment of doughnut. In his Ode to a Dome, Ben Okri pleads: "May this Dome, in its throne, redeem our solemn woes. For we know not how the wind of judgment blows."

Admittedly, as visions go,

Mandelson's seems remarkably prosaic. Did he not consider Why we Bother, or Where we Went Wrong? Still, the modesty of the concept should make any further trips to exotic theme parks unnecessary. If the Dome purpose is to reflect our own lives and preoccupations back at us, virtually all the required fact-finding can be had for £32, the price of the new handbook, Britain 1998.

Though the guide is not, as some reviewers have observed, it presents its figures in touchingly upbeat style: "the general level of nutrition remains high"—and, under headings such as The Availability of Certain Durable Goods, it contains more illuminating material on Who we Are, etc., than will ever be found up Splash Mountain.

**The zone should be simplified to sub-themes: 'Watch Telly' and 'Get Pissed'**

On leisure, its findings suggest that the Dome's What we Do zone should be further simplified, down to the sub-themes: "Watch Telly" and "Get Pissed". Television (we watch an average 25 hours per week; 82 per cent have a video) demands dramatic recognition: one picture a col-

sal set and sofa, on which millions of visitors can recline simultaneously. Each will be issued with a bag ("cigarette smoking is the greatest single cause of preventable illness and death in Britain"). A copy of the Sun ("popular newspapers appeal to people wanting news of a more upbeat character, presented more concisely") and a beer ("the cost of alcohol misuse in England and Wales is £2,700 million a year").

In the next zone, Football, and a huge, flag-draped, three-dimensional, interactive display illustrating its influence on national life. "Legislation has made it an offence in England and Wales to throw objects at football matches, run on to the playing area or chant indecent or racist abuse." In contrast, the arts can make do with minimal representation—a daily parade of novelists or poets? A grove containing Melvyn Bragg?—for, as the handbook notes, culture has yet to become "a part of everyday life".

Who we Are, Body:—here, Mandelson should just remodel the hollow giant, through whose androgynous limbs he promises "a fun-filled educational odyssey".

IT CAN only add to the merriment if the figure shows that we are becoming a nation of withered hypochondriacs who eat too much, shun exercise and reject greens.

A confined space will suffice for Who we Are, Mind, for as the authors of Britain 1988 report, "standards of literacy have not changed significantly since 1945". Who we Are, Soul: Mandelson must resist episcopal pressure to make Christianity pre-eminent. Though still fairly popular for weddings (32 per cent) the Anglican church now baptises under a quarter of New British infants, and is helpless in the face of cohabitation. Instead, our grand divorce rate, the highest in Europe, could perhaps be acknowledged with an attraction similar to Disney World's wedding pavilion: instead of a marriage, visiting couples will experience a very special and memorable separation.

Mandelson has rightly described Where we Live as the "most complicated and ambitious" of his themes. How can the Dome convey the population density of the 22 million cars, trashed landscape, pecked trains, stinking tubes, executive estates, heaving prisons, overflowing hospitals?

With a fairground trick? If the millennium dome is to portray us as the 1988 handbook tells us we are—a nation of loud, passive, uncultured, greedy slobs—then perhaps all it need contain is a gigantic ball of mirrors. Non-distorting, of course.

## Women were asking their hairdressers for a 'Rachel'

theory of celebrity endorsement. Any emerging star is soon paid large sums of money to pretend that they eat or wear or use a certain product.

In its original form, this sales technique depended on matching a famous person with a product that fitted an aspect of their public personality. The actress Jennifer Aniston, star of the sit-com Friends, had an unusual hairdo. When evidence emerged that she was follically influential—

young women were asking their hairdressers for a "Rachel", her television character—the shampoo manufacturers L'Oréal paid her to front their campaign.

A popular modern variation is for a celebrity to flog a product for which they seem comically inappropriate. Hence the football manager Kenny Dalglish—celebrated among fans for scarcely ever speaking at all—is currently the official face of British Telecom.

## It makes me grumpy

Matthew Engel



THE moment can be dated precisely. It was one minute past eight o'clock on Boxing morning when I finally concluded that Tony Blair's Government was turning into a real pain in the buttocks.

The lead item on the Radio Four news bulletin was the revelation that Jack Straw had written to someone or other to do something or other about football hooliganism. (Forgive me it was not a moment of profound concentration.)

Now we all know there were tensions in the Straw household over Christmas. Anyone could have said anything that might have caused one family member or another to stalk off to their room and start writing letters. ("Shall we watch Men Behaving Badly?... We could play Charades... It would be nice to have a joint next Sunday lunchtime.")

Now, Blair has just won the general election. The British General Election of 1997 (published by Macmillan) is the latest in the series of Nuffield studies, which have come out every election since 1945 and are treated by political scientists as near-definitive. If the general election was a crossword puzzle,

In 1922 people would have wanted a Blairite Labour Party whose main ambition was to manage Toryism and do nothing that would alienate the editor of the Sun. But right now I believe there is a more genuine hunger for change than at any time since 1945. There is a broad-based sense that positive action is needed to improve the public services and a feeling of disgust about the policies that allowed them to degenerate.

Indeed, a few show trials for figures of the ancient régime would probably have created far more enthusiasm than Mandelson's Dome. Nothing too vindictive, just a gentle working-over of the worst culprits: Michael How-

ard say, and a few of the more rapacious privatisation bandits.

No chance. For those of us living outside Scotland and Wales, what tangible evidence is there that anything happened at all on May 1? All we have is a country where it is now illegal to give the dog a bone. Douglas Hogg could have come up with that one.

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and say, and a few of the more rapacious privatisation bandits.

No chance. For those of us living outside Scotland and Wales, what tangible evidence is there that anything happened at all on May 1? All we have is a country where it is now illegal to give the dog a bone. Douglas Hogg could have come up with that one.

UNFORTUNATELY, Blair's conservative instincts have received a sort of confirmation. The British General Election of 1997 (published by Macmillan) is the latest in the series of Nuffield studies, which have come out every election since 1945 and are treated by political scientists as near-definitive. If the general election was a crossword puzzle,

this book is meant to be the solution.

The psephologists John Curtice and Michael Steed began by noting that it was not all that much of a landslide: lowish Labour share of the vote, and low turnout, so that less than 31 per cent of the electorate voted for the new Government, a smaller proportion than that for any post-war government with a working majority. They relate this point later, but that's the message that sticks.

What all the sophisticated analysis can understate is the extent to which there were only two parties in the last election: the Tories and the unTories, and that voters to an unprecedented extent chose whichever unTory was most likely to win. On that basis nearly 70 per cent voted for change, far more than in 1995.

The voters have not bugged an inch since May. There is no nostalgia for the Conservatives: John Major is never mentioned; William Hague remains a figure of fun; there is something in even "Sir" Brian Mawhinney's voice at present which suggests he knows no one wants to listen to him.

### Save a Romanian child from cold and hunger this winter

Radu has no Christmas presents to play with: he didn't get any. His parents don't even have money for heating, warm clothes or food. And temperatures are dropping to Siberian levels. He may not survive January at home, and then his parents will be forced to send him to an orphanage. Thousands of children are in Radu's position now as deep poverty and bitter cold force parents to take the heartbreaking decision to put their child in an orphanage.

**Your gift of £25 will bring hope and help keep Romanian children in their families this winter. And for always.**

You can help protect a child from a cold and hungry winter at home or the trauma of life in an orphanage by sending £25. This will help one of our Childcare Officers to deliver Care Parcels of basic essentials to a family in need and keep them together in these times of severe hardship.

**Help deliver a Care Parcel to Romania this winter for only £25**

Enclose £25 to help deliver Winter Care Parcels to Romanian families. Cheques to The Romanian Orphanage Trust. Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card

Card no. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone no. \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Tanya Barron, (GR2), Winter Care Parcel Appeal, The Romanian Orphanage Trust, FREEPOST K23359, 64 Queen Street, LONDON EC4B 4AR or call 01273 299333 now.

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مكتبة القرآن الكريم







## Toyota boost for Deeside

TOYOTA, Japan's largest car manufacturer, yesterday announced plans to invest £150 million to expand its engine plant at Deeside in North Wales, writes Nicholas Bannister.

The move, which will create a further 310 jobs at the Flintshire plant, was welcomed by Tony Blair at the start of his Japanese tour. The Prime Minister, who met Toyota's president, Hiroshi Okuda, immediately after arriving in Japan, said: "This significant expansion brings Toyota's total UK inward investment to almost £1.5 billion and underlines the UK's attraction to global companies."

The announcement comes in the same week that Ford announced a £200 million project to build a new "baby" Jaguar sports car at its Halewood plant on Merseyside, subject to securing adequate government aid.

Toyota's new investment will virtually double output at the Deeside plant, which started production in 1992, to about 400,000 engines a year.

It will supply engines to the company's new small car plant which is being sited in northern France rather than Britain.



Any questions? ... Tony Blair faces the press at a joint news conference with Toyota president Hiroshi Okuda in Tokyo yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: ERKO SUGITA

## EMI to buy Waterstone's

Roger Cowe

A NEW giant is set to emerge in the book market as WH Smith prepares to sell its Waterstone's chain to music group EMI, which will merge it with Dillons and float the new company.

The retail group is also believed to be preparing to sell the Virgin Our Price music retailing business back to Richard Branson's Virgin empire. Virgin has first refusal on the chain, of which it owns 25 per cent, and last year of-

fered £185 million for the other 75 per cent.

The two deals would allow a substantial cash repayment perhaps approaching £500 million — to WH Smith shareholders this summer.

The £300 million book shop deal will see Tim Waterstone return to the chain he founded in 1982. He will be a partner with EMI in the acquisition, and is expected to lead the subsequent flotation of the music and book retailing business from EMI later this year.

Mr Waterstone, who was originally a WH Smith manager, left the company to

found the book chain, later selling it to his former employer in 1989.

He was rebuffed by WH Smith in October, after offering a deal to take over the whole group and concentrate on sales of books, magazines and stationery.

Closures will result from the union of Dillons and Waterstone's, but the resulting combination will overtake the WH Smith chain to become the country's biggest bookseller, accounting for a sixth of the UK market. The WH Smith high street chain, which concentrates on a relatively small range of popular

titles, is currently the largest bookseller, with 15 per cent of the market.

EMI began the process of "due diligence" to confirm the value of Waterstone's, this week.

Both WH Smith and EMI said yesterday that they were negotiating the sale, which is likely to be agreed within the next few weeks.

The sale will pre-empt the planned flotation of Waterstone's, which was announced by WH Smith in October. The retail group announced the planned sale of the book chain, as well as the intended sale of the Vir-

gin Our Price music retailing business, in response to the approach from Mr Waterstone and investor pressure.

Waterstone's has 115 branches and is one of the group's most successful businesses. Its sale is seen as a sop to shareholders, who have demanded value after years of disappointing results.

EW analyst Tony Shiret described it yesterday as "a short-term expedient".

EMI has been seen as a natural buyer for Waterstone's, following its acquisition of the Dillons chain in 1986. But the group has subsequently focused on the music busi-

ness, demerging the Thorn electrical retailing chain last year. It needs a partner in the acquisition of Waterstone's because shareholders would not want the group to become heavily involved in retailing.

EMI is believed to have wanted to float off the Dillons and HMV retail combination at the same time as Thorn, but the retailing arm was not seen as a substantial enough entity.

The addition of Waterstone's would create a 450-strong retail chain with international outlets, which is seen as strong enough to stand on its own.

## Takeover move sees shares in Sketchley soar

Ian King

SKETCHLEY, the struggling dry cleaning and retailing group, admitted yesterday that it had received a takeover approach.

Shares in Sketchley, which have lost more than half their value during the past two-and-a-half years, jumped 12p to 89p.

Announcing details of the approach, Sketchley insisted it did not know who was behind the move, claiming it had been dealing only with a third party.

However, with Johnson Group — Britain's biggest dry cleaning company — ruling itself out of contention, it is believed that a management buy-out team is trying to put together some kind of deal.

Last night Sketchley — which also owns the SuperSaves photo-processing business — said it had received a "tentative approach" from a company yet to be incorporated, but that after discussing the matter with its advisors, HSBC Investment Bank

the approach had been rejected.

The company — which said it had asked for clarification from the would-be bidder's representatives — added: "A further approach from the same party was made to Sketchley on December 22, 1997, which was similarly rejected."

On Thursday night, the board of Sketchley was informed that approaches had been made to certain of the company's shareholders in recent days on behalf of this same party.

It is understood that PDPM, which owns nearly 15 per cent of Sketchley, and M&G, which owns 13.4 per cent, are among the investors approached.

Prudential, with more than 10 per cent, is the third biggest shareholder. City analysts said last night that a bid for Sketchley could mean in at as much as 75p a share, valuing the company at around £71 million, with the heavily-indebted group's break-up value worth at least 70p a share.

News of the approach followed a wretched year for Sketchley, in which it failed to pay an interim dividend and took a one-off hit of £9.9 million, due to accounting "deficiencies".

## German jobless threat to Kohl

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMAN unemployment soared to a fresh peak of more than 4.5 million last month, forcing Chancellor Helmut Kohl to open an election year yesterday by conceding that an earlier pledge to halve the jobless rate by the millennium would go unfulfilled.

Climbing to the highest ever point in the history of the post-war federal republic, unemployment last month stood at almost 12 per cent nationally, with a 20 per cent rate in east Germany double

that in the west, it was announced yesterday.

Bernhard Jagoda, the head of the federal employment office in Nuremberg, said he did not expect any improvement this year. "All in all, economic dynamism was not strong enough in 1997 for recovery in the labour market," he said.

Exactly two years ago, when the jobless rate went through the 4-million pain threshold, Mr Kohl promised to halve the rate by the year 2000. Going into an election year, he said, he was determined to meet his Christian Democratic Union

target would "certainly not be reached," he stated.

It was his first public admission that his policy had gone awry and could hardly come at a worse time as he prepares to bid for a second fifth term as chancellor in September, and faces a couple of crucial regional elections before then.

The cash-strapped government may also need to impose more unpopular measures in an election year, since unemployment of less than 4.4 million and experts forecast an annual average of at least 100,000 more than that.

Opposition leaders charged that the latest dismal figures proved the failure of Mr Kohl's policies and trade union leaders are threatening a tough pay round.

Germany's Federal Cartel Office yesterday said it opposed the planned pay-television alliance between Bertelsmann AG and Kirch. A spokesman said German regulators told their Brussels counterparts the planned tie-up between Premiere — a venture involving Bertelsmann and Kirch — and Kirch's DFL would create a market-dominating entity and should be barred.

## UBS pledges derivatives explanation

Dan Atkinson

UNION Bank of Switzerland yesterday promised to use a full disclosure of the reportedly huge derivatives losses in 1997 that may have played a part in driving it into the arms of rival Swiss Bank Corporation.

The bank confirmed its London-based global head of gifts, currency and derivatives trading Hans-Peter Bauer had left but would not confirm that he had been sacked nor would it comment on reports that its full-year loss on derivatives trading was far worse than the £83 million reported for the year's first half.

Rumours of a sour position

in derivatives at UBS began to circulate before Christmas after puzzlement at why the bigger of the two banks was effectively the junior partner in the merger with SBC.

Should the 1997 UBS results — due in mid-February — confirm a big loss, that would go some way to an explanation.

Ironically, news of the possible derivatives losses came on the day UBS settled a legal tussle over share structures with corporate predator Martin Ebor, whose BK Vision investment fund holds a quarter of UBS's registered shares. There have been suggestions UBS piled into derivatives in the mid-1990s partly to help deliver the sort of earnings that would please Mr Ebor.

### The big losses

• December 1996: Swiss Bank finds losses of £77 million caused by sale of derivatives in its investment banking arm. Former trader Kyriacos said losses related to his interest-rate derivatives trading activities. Michael Barrett HSBC said the amount of money involved was not significant.

• March 1997: Danubius Corp, a former trader at National Bank's New York branch, was blamed by the Federal Reserve Bank for the liquidation of books and losses related to his interest-rate derivatives trading activities. Michael Barrett HSBC said the amount of money involved was not significant.

• November 1997: Chase Manhattan found to have lost up to £125 million on trading emerging-market debt; part of the business was reportedly due to exposure to emerging markets through currency derivatives products.

• January 1998: Union Bank of Switzerland reportedly sitting on unidentified derivatives losses; UBS pledged full disclosure in 1997 figures due mid-February.

## Plunging markets alert West

### Asia in turmoil

John Agliardi in Jakarta and Mark Tren in New York

AS STOCK markets plunged yesterday in reaction to the ongoing turmoil in Asian economies, western politicians woke to the mounting crisis and pledged to help find a solution to Asia's problems.

London's FTSE 100 index slumped by nearly 99 points, or 1.9 per cent, to end at 5186.3, while America's Dow

Jones industrial average was down nearly 200 points, or 2.6 per cent, an hour before the close of trading yesterday.

Faced with the Asian crisis reverberating in the US, President Clinton promised yesterday to send representatives to assess the state of the Indonesian and Korean economies.

Deputy treasury secretary Lawrence Summers will lead the US team, with International Monetary Fund managing director Michel Camdessus and his deputy Stanley Fischer leading a delegation from the IMF. The announcement that senior US and IMF officials will be heading to Indonesia followed an unusual

telephone call to Indonesian president Suharto by Mr Clinton from Air Force One.

During the 25-minute phone call from the aircraft, Mr Clinton made it clear that the Indonesian leader has to swallow the IMF's prescriptions for austerity and reform. Mr Clinton also talked for 12 minutes to Singapore's Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong.

According to Suharto's spokesman Mr Mardiono, the president promised to "seriously implement" the IMF's reforms.

"President Clinton said he was concerned Indonesia was facing monetary upheaval. Mr Clinton believed that under Mr Suharto's leader-

ship, Indonesians would be able to overcome the difficult conditions," said Mr Mardiono. "The main task of President Clinton's envoy during his visit to Jakarta will be to see for himself the steps that Indonesia is taking in handling the monetary crisis and maybe he will also give an opinion."

The Indonesian currency, the rupiah, jumped more than 20 per cent on the news, to close at 7,600 to the dollar. Its surge was helped by heavy dollar selling by the Indonesian central bank and several other state banks.

Switzerland's Zurich Group pulled out of plans to buy a 25 per cent stake in Asia's biggest non-Japanese brokerage, prompting America's First Chicago to cancel its plans to buy a smaller stake. Neither Zurich nor Peregrine explained why the Hong Kong firm was left at the altar, but analysts are betting that Zurich was frightened by the size of Peregrine's exposure

### Indonesian debt exposure may bring down Peregrine

EXPOSURE to Indonesian debt threatened to sink one of Asia's biggest brokerages last night as Hong Kong's Peregrine Investment Holdings looked set to fold after a rescue scheme for the troubled financial house collapsed.

Switzerland's Zurich Group pulled out of plans to buy a 25 per cent stake in Asia's biggest non-Japanese brokerage, prompting America's First Chicago to cancel its plans to buy a smaller stake. Neither Zurich nor Peregrine explained why the Hong Kong firm was left at the altar, but analysts are betting that Zurich was frightened by the size of Peregrine's exposure

to Indonesian corporations, including some \$365 million (£164 million) in loans to Indonesia's ironically named Steady Safe taxi company, a firm thought to be on the brink of bankruptcy.

Hong Kong regulatory authorities have characterised the firm's position as uncertain and have barred Peregrine's traders from taking on new trading positions, while employees said traders were discouraged from coming to work on Monday.

Peregrine shares have not traded for several days, but fell by more than 20 per cent earlier in the week in anticipation that Zurich might get cold feet. — Bloomberg

### Saturday Notebook

## Asian Peregrine's stoop bodes ill



Alex Brummer

THERE are few more graphic demonstrations of the despair in Asian finance than the implosion of Peregrine Investments. In a decade, founders Philip Tose and Francis Leung transformed the small, Hong Kong-based stockbroker into Asia's most dynamic investment house, with more than 33 offices conducting business in 15 countries.

Visitors to Hong Kong would be invited to briefings at Peregrine for the most expert view of developments beyond the territory, to China and the whole of Asia.

When Peregrine found itself short of capital in November, it had no trouble rounding up support in the shape of a 24 per cent strategic stake by the insurance and fund-management group Zurich, which is currently merging with BAT financial services.

When this proved inadequate, in early January, after Peregrine shares fell, Zurich demanded a bigger stake of about one-third for its \$200 million (£124.2 million) injection of cash.

But after an 18 per cent slump in the Hong Kong stock market in the last week — as the authorities sought to hang on to the precarious link between the American and Hong Kong dollar — the position of Peregrine looked more precarious by the day.

The decision by the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission to suspend its shares and restrict its business looks mighty ominous. Among the firm's immediate problems is its exposure to Indonesia, where it has foolishly ended up holding \$265 million in promissory notes to PT Steady Safe, a taxi, bus and ferry company which as a result of meltdown in Jakarta is having difficulty meeting interest payments.

Peregrine has promoted new issues in both Thailand and Indonesia to the value of \$2.6 billion — many of which have turned sour, alienating Peregrine clients.

A desperate search for a new investors is now under way, with Peregrine pointing out that the underlying businesses are still profitable, if not at the \$129 million level achieved in 1996.

Zurich, despite its vast resources, clearly thinks differently and its retreat from Hong Kong reflects a loss of confidence in the territory which, with all the goodwill of Beijing and the International Monetary Fund, seems to be a long-term problem. The first Asian banking casualty of the New Year provides a salutary reminder of the problems facing policymakers as they look at the challenges of holding together the region's financial system.

Tim Waterstone's wish to regain a degree of control over the upmarket book chain he founded. It would also give EMI shareholders a stake in what effectively will become — excluding WH Smith itself — Britain's largest bookselling chain with the opportunity for some cross-media selling of CDs, videos, books-on-tape and other products.

Together, this lot could be eventually floated off from EMI, if the stock market were willing to raise a tidy little sum pleasing to those EMI investors who have lately become a little disillusioned with this star-struck stock, despite the success of Britain's music industry.

Certainly, for the City, this looks neat enough, with fees for all of the bankers involved — SSC Warburg for EMI and Merrill Lynch for Tim Waterstone.

This is the way deal-making in London seems to be going, with investment bankers acting as principals bringing deals together for instance in the proposed SSC Warburg buyout of Christie's, rather than just as the facilitators of old. But while the financial engineering is terrific and the fees great for the overseas investment banking sector in the City, the consumer might have some concerns.

Together Dillons and Waterstone's will have control of 17 per cent of the book market, making the two companies leaders in the sector. In upmarket books this will place them way ahead of Books, etc and Blackwells, each of whom commands around 2 per cent.

The argument will no doubt be made that this is now a global market, and that with online services Waterstone's and Dillons will have to compete with Amazon, Barnes & Noble etc.

Maybe. But it has not happened yet. While there may be some overcapacity on the high street as a result of Dillons and Waterstone's competition for bigger, full-service stores, the consumer and the price war — which the end of the net book agreement was meant to signal — will not be helped by this agglomeration.

Deflation angst

THE rise in the German jobless rate to 11.9 per cent in December, the highest level since the second world war, provides useful support to Chancellor Gordon Brown's reasoning for postponing British membership of the single European currency to beyond 2000.

Clearly, it does not make a great deal of sense for Britain, where unemployment stands at close to 5 per cent, to attach itself to a mainland Europe locomotive still struggling to shake of recessionary impulses and the economic costs of re-unification — construction in former East Germany is among the reasons for higher unemployment.

More interesting for the bond market, and for that matter global interest rates, is that stickiness in the labour market may delay any early moves by the Bundesbank to raise short-term interest rates early this year.

The same message is emerging from the US. There, deflation and the potential impact of the Asian crisis are putting downward pressure on bond yields. Until recently, as with EMI's retail interests, HMV and Dillons, looks like a neat solution to several problems. It removes from the WH Smith domain the ticklish problem of Sir

Bargain to book

AS FAR as the City is concerned a buy-out of bookseller Waterstone's from WH Smith followed by a merger with EMI's retail interests, HMV and Dillons, looks like a neat solution to several problems. It removes from the WH Smith domain the ticklish problem of Sir

THE Lloyd's of London insurance market is expected to turn in more than £1 billion profit for 1996, according to an independent research group, Chatet.

But the researchers warned that the return is unlikely to be repeated in the near future, because of overcapacity in the world insurance market and falling rates.

The group added that just one serious catastrophe claim in 1998 could push the market back into the red.

Chatet's forecasts are compiled from underwriters' own projections, and its estimates for 1995 are some £80 million less than the 1994 figures. Lloyd's profits are always set

nounced three years in arrears to allow time for claims to be settled.

After £140 million commission is deducted by members' agents, the amount payable to Names for 1995 will total £917 million.

"No one will complain about that," said Chairman Sturge of Chatet. "But by 1997 we think bottom-line profit could be down to just 3.5 per cent."

"This year is a bleak scenario. Rates have fallen again in the 1996 renewal season and unless it is another good year for catastrophes it is likely to sink into a loss."

To illustrate how insurance rates have been slashed Mr Sturge cited the example of the Cunard cruise line, which includes the QE2.

## £917m profit for Names

Julia Finch

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TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS			
Australia 2.45	France 9.50	Italy 8.80	Singapore 2.81
Austria 2.02	Germany 2.84	Malta 2.84	South Africa 7.78
Belgium 5.71	Greece 4.53	Netherlands 3.19	Spain 2.99
Canada 2.25	Hong Kong 12.16	New Zealand 2.75	Sweden 12.56
Cyprus 6.87	India 64.07	Norway 11.75	Switzerland 1.22
Denmark 10.81	Ireland 1.15	Portugal 2.88	Turkey 345.110
Finland 6.70	Israel 5.75	Saudi Arabia 5.96	USA 1.5803

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

Monday's Economics Page will analyse the Asian crisis



Waterstone wins back Waterstone's, page 11  
The Roller — just an assembly job, page 10

# FinanceGuardian

## Piracy steals notes from sound talent

**W**HEN an anti-piracy squad raided a Belgian warehouse and seized 94,000 compact discs it was one of the most successful operations against an illegal trade that costs the music industry up to \$6.25 billion a year in lost sales and royalties.

But, says Mike Edwards, director of operations at the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, "Within a week the same versions of the CDs were available on the streets of Holland. We took away about £160,000 worth of manufacturing equipment, but the gangs found it easy to replace. There is big, big money being made in this business."

Globally, in 1996, \$3.1 billion of recorded music was pirated, with one in three of all CDs sold manufactured illegally. These products, sold at a reduced price, displaced the original material, which would have earned the legitimate music industry at least twice that amount.

Although the phenomenon is not new, audio piracy is mushrooming and in the last year there has been growing evidence that the trade is closely linked with organised crime, including the Chinese Triads, the Mafia and Russian crime gangs.

The problem stretches from mainland China across the Pacific, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, and is rife in parts of Europe. In the last nine months, links between audio piracy, drug smuggling and illegal firearms have been uncovered in the Netherlands.

Greater availability of manufacturing equipment has compounded the problem — take Hong Kong. In a single year, China's newest region has expanded its CD-making capacity seven times, from 60 million to 400 million discs, or about 20 per cent of the two billion CDs sold each year. If you add capacity installed in mainland China and Taiwan, this region alone could now manufacture half of the world's compact discs, according to the IFPI.

With films, music and computer software — including games — increasingly available in digitally-encoded format on disc or on the Internet, the multimedia opportunities for organised crime have every prospect of growing further.

Culture Secretary Chris Smith wants to take action to mitigate piracy's effects on the business, which he wants to make into one of Britain's most important industries.

Next week he will announce the formation of a

taskforce to promote the UK's music sector and rewrite policy for the industry. Mick Hucknall, Simply Red's multi-millionaire singer and New Labour devotee, is expected to be among its dozen or so members drawn from across the business. So too is Rob Dickins, chairman of the British Phonographic Industries trade association.

With 25 per cent of all recorded music sold worldwide involving at least some British involvement, it is obvious why Mr Smith wants to get a grip on an industry with a huge balance of payments surplus and an estimated value of \$4 billion a year.

But the creation of the committee is likely to promote envy among more established industries, who might have hoped that they, too, would benefit from New Labour's willingness to intervene in vital sectors of the economy.

More traditional manufacturing firms will have noted the setting up of the Creative Industries Taskforce, which includes Richard Branson and Alan McGee, head of the Oasis label, Creation Records, and then the founding of the film policy group in Mr Smith's department. They will have noticed Noel Gallagher and Mick Hucknall partying at No 10 Downing Street. They could be forgiven for asking why, if the music business is doing so well, does it need government help?

Mr Smith — who fought to win sponsorship of the industry from the Department of Trade and Industry soon after being sent to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in May — was unequivocal on the issue in a speech to American executives in New York last autumn.

"The music business is one



Child of Britpop... Prodigy's Keith Flint offers his singular take on 'cool Britannia' style at a recent Glasgow concert

PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD

of our most valuable creative industries. It is worth \$4 billion to the economy, including around \$2 billion generated overseas. The industry employs 115,000 people. It is bigger than our steel industry, and our musicians' union is now bigger than our miners' union," he said.

He has already started to act by seconding Sara John from the British Phonographic Industries to his department to advise on crucial policy issues. The timing of the new committee is fortuitous — it comes at a juncture when a 10-year spurt of growth in wholesale music sales to over \$1 billion a year appears to have stalled. It also comes as international lawmakers face the challenge of protecting copyright and intellectual property in the digital age.

But the question of what the Government can actually do for the industry remains. Music's multinational groups seem to be getting along quite nicely without any help. The creative talent which is its backbone often thrives best without institutionalisation, and indeed shows little respect for it.

In his New York speech, Mr

Smith said: "We clearly have no direct role in the creative process — we cannot make music. But we are determined to create the right conditions in which the music business can thrive."

He appears to have placed three items on the committee's agenda — piracy, intellectual property rights and copyright protection and music education.

Mr Edwards says that there is a great deal of governments can do to crack down on piracy. He notes that only this week, the Hong Kong government has introduced a new licensing system which should ensure that CD-making capacity in the region is used legitimately. He would like to see pressure brought to bear in all important markets for similar controls.

the industry is controlled.

Although Britain cannot follow suit in isolation from its partners in Europe, it can at least take the lead and co-ordinate action, he says.

Rupert Perry, chief executive of EMI Europe, agrees. He calls for the Government to use its six-month presidency of the European Union to ensure that the World Intellectual Property Organisation treaty, signed in Geneva a year ago, is ratified by EU states. Mr Smith has pledged to find time in the legislative agenda to do just that, but an EU directive is still pending.

John Deacon, director general of the BPI, believes the Government's agenda should be simple: to put the music business in its rightful place on the industrial map. The overriding concern should be to ensure the industry can claim its rightful stake in the digital age. "What we need is clear laws throughout Europe to enable us to have the same degree of protection in the digital era."

Andy Taylor, whose multimedia music group, Sanctuary, is seeking a Stock Exchange listing via a reverse takeover of the Burlington Group, believes the committee can do useful work if it concentrates on problems closer to home.

He sees a need to bolster the industry's infrastructure through education and training. Few graduates — even those with music business qualifications — come away with appropriate training to work in the industry. The City and the banks remain inherently suspicious of companies whose value is tied up with intangible assets like the sometimes ephemeral talent of a performer.

He points to the recent resurgence of independent record labels which have traditionally been at the cutting edge of trends in pop music. "Creative people who can spot and develop artists are the people who need support. The infrastructure of the business needs support to grow so that the artist can plug into that infrastructure," Mr Taylor says.

Most of the public emphasis has been on pop music. But

the classical music industry is in need of help too, says William Mival, composition co-ordinator at the Royal College of Music in London.

British-trained musicians are employed in "huge numbers" abroad, where they are renowned for sight-reading, the ability to learn new pieces quickly and to play on original instruments. Mr Mival says these skills are born out of necessity. British musicians have less rehearsal time and need to learn faster.

But the industry is concerned that young talent is not being properly fostered. Mr Mival says there has been a fall in the number of pupils taking the music exams set by the Associated Boards, indicating that fewer children are learning to play.

Those who are learning are still largely from middle-class families who can afford to pay for lessons. State education has been badly damaged by budget restraints, although there are a few schools with

As bootleg versions of recorded music reach a record high SIMON BEAVIS assesses Labour's strategy for one of Britain's main export earning industries

well-deserved reputations for music teaching.

Mr Mival says that the Government should make two changes. First, ensure that music is taught at all levels as well as in more schools. Composition, musical theory and instrument tuition should be on offer. A-levels are too difficult and obscure — pupils are asked to write choral harmonies when they barely know how to write a scale, he says. The result is that many pupils pass by learning tricks rather than understanding what they are doing and why.

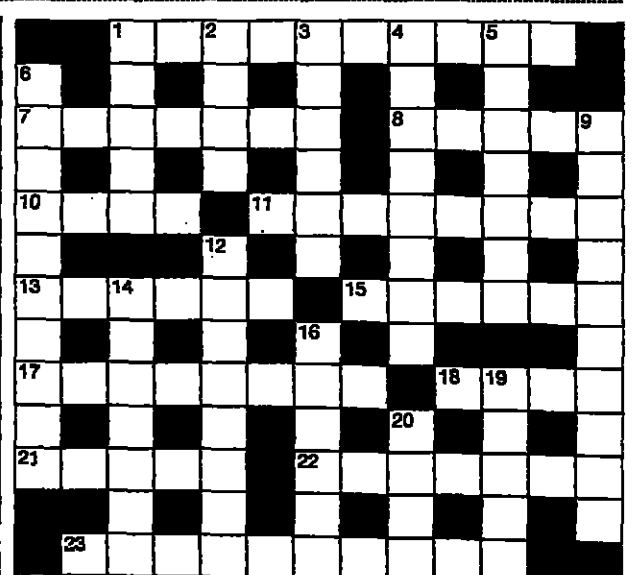
Second, Chris Smith's taskforce should help colleges and schools develop closer ties with musical ensembles so that students can opt for more work experience.

It is a sprawling agenda — from Triad audio pirates to primary-school children deprived of the chance to play a violin. The music industry hopes Mr Smith will start to prove next week that he is able to create some lasting harmony in this disparate but creative business.

### Quick Crossword No. 8641

TYRANNICAL  
I E N D R D  
P R O G R E S S I V E  
I D E Y I R  
D A T E P R E C I S E  
E L U O U  
M U N I F I C A T I O N  
F I T  
S T R A T O N U M  
H L O R R A  
R O I L I N I T I A T E  
D O V N S O  
S T R E N G T H E N

Solution No. 8640



#### Across

- 1 Basis (10)
- 7 Fidelity (7)
- 8 Garret (5)
- 10 Uncommon (4)
- 11 Response (8)
- 13 Disobedient (6)
- 15 Tranquil (5)
- 17 Runaway (6)
- 18 Brief satirical theatrical sketch (4)
- 21 Redbreast (5)
- 22 Sure (7)
- 23 Be fired (3,3,4)

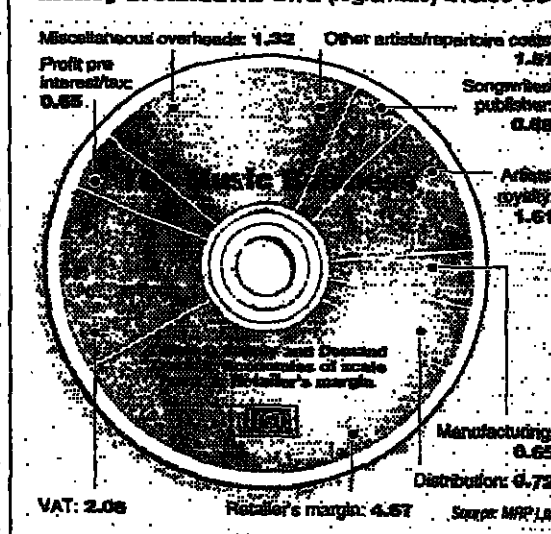
#### Down

- 1 Lobby (5)
- 2 Unlikely (4)
- 3 Lace mat (6)
- 4 Roofer — ex-PM (8)
- 5 Exterior (7)
- 6 Versatile person, especially in sport (3-7)
- 9 Squeeze-box (10)
- 12 Reed instrument (8)
- 14 Absurd (7)
- 16 Save (6)
- 19 Aptitude (5)
- 20 Operatic song (4)

Stuck? Call our solutions line on 0901 338 248. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ATS

### Fleeing the music industry

Money breakdown On a (legitimate) £13.99 CD



### Pirates on parade

Domestic piracy levels, 1996, %



● The British music industry is worth \$2.5bn a year to the economy, of which \$1.25bn is generated abroad. It employs 115,000 people.

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# The Guardian

## the week

Saturday January 10 1998

### Palace versus people

The Queen's subjects seem to have fallen out of love with the monarchy. **Luke Harding and David Hencke** report on why the royals may have to bend before the will of the nation



Monarchy in focus

The Queen has hired Mori to set up a focus group on the future of the monarchy. But we may never know the result. So the Guardian has set up its own focus group (left) to gauge the opinions of the nation. The message is that it is time for radical change

PHOTOGRAPHS: GARRY WEAVER (ABOVE); MARTIN GOODMAN (LEFT)

**O**N A comfy sofa in West Wickham, in the well-heeled Conservative London suburb of Bromley, the royal family is being demolished. Sitting around a table laden with tortilla chips and cans of Heineken beer is Don, a retired bank manager who swore allegiance to the Queen while in the Army. He thinks Her Majesty is privately relieved by Diana's death.

Next to him is Jane, a waitress who believes the royal family "loved their yacht Britannia more than Diana". Next to her is James, a modern languages student who pictures Elizabeth II as a "gracious old lady".

Over on the other side of the room, by the stereo stack, is Pat, a resource school manager, who thinks of the royals as "removed from the rest of us. Next to her is Jean, an administration assistant, who feels the Queen should take her gloves off more. Finally, smouldering in an armchair is Alan, a confirmed, Cromwellian republican. A retired electrical engineer, you sense he wants to chop their heads off.

They are public opinion. Or at least, they are public opinion professionally adjusted with regard to class, gender and age. And their message for the House of Windsor is an uncomfortable one.

Normally groups such as this meet in the mock-Tudor home of Dianne, the local researcher, who lives on the Kent border, to discuss the rival merits of different brands of dogfood or soap powder. Tonight they are discussing a more pregnant topic: their attitude to the royal family.

Two months ago Buckingham Palace took the unprecedented

step of asking MORI, the polling organisation, to carry out a similar study using a handful of focus groups up and down the country. Soon, the logging figure of MORI's chairman Bob Worcester is likely to disappear into the bowels of Buckingham Palace to present his findings. His report will, in turn, be crunched by a palace research unit before being discreetly presented at the next monthly meeting of the Way Ahead group, a group of senior royals and their key senior advisers. The future of the royal family lies tremulously in their hands. Will the report be published? Or no. In the best traditions of royal secrecy its contents — whether anodyne or inflammatory — will never be revealed.

In a spirit of inquiry, the Guardian therefore decided to commission its own focus group to find out just what Mr Worcester might say. We approached an independent professional market research company, One World Research and Communications, and asked it to use the same methodology as MORI. The advantage of using a focus group rather than a larger, quantitative survey, is that qualitative research gives some insight into why people hold a particular view.

One World in turn got in touch with Jane, Pat, Alan, Jean, James and Don. All six duly turned up at Dianne's semi-detached home on a blustery Thursday night, unsure what they had been summoned to discuss.

If their views, which swiftly emerged, are representative, then Middle England is in an angry, unforgiving mood. More than four months after the death of Diana, the House of Windsor is still widely perceived as being outdated and aloof, having reacted to the cri-

sis of her death with a slow-footedness verging on the callous.

Many members of the Windsor clan emerge from the mine of public with their reputations shredded. Prince Andrew is a foolish cuckold who plays too much golf. Princess Margaret is bored by public engagements and reluctantly attends only "four or five state occasions a year". The Queen, according to Pat, a sceptic, is seen as "fuddy duddy now" although

**I think the Queen is thinking 'Thank God Diana's gone'**

James, a young royalist, feels she is still a "symbol of the nation". There is universal admiration for Princess Anne ("She is so hard-working"), but little for Prince Charles, who is seen as self-opinionated, and even less for the Duke of Edinburgh. These views may be unfair, but they are common.

The level of hostility explains, perhaps, why Tony Blair and his senior entourage have decided one of the great projects of the Blair administration will be to rescue the House of Windsor from public opprobrium. It is only a short stroll from Buckingham Palace, through the verdant rectangle of St James's Park, to the smart front door of 10 Downing Street. These days the distance between the two great institutions is shorter than ever. Behind the scenes, the relationship between the palace and the Prime Minister, forged in the heady aftermath of Diana's death, has been blossoming like a teenage romance.

According to the focus group, the events following on from the fatal Paris car crash were spectacularly mismanaged by the royal family. The House of Windsor suddenly found itself "vulnerable" and "fearful". The royals had their way, Diana's death would have been "swept under the carpet" with a private funeral organised by Earl Spencer.

Half way through the 90-minute session in West Wickham the group is shown the Queen's belated live broadcast to the nation, made from Buckingham Palace on the eve of Diana's funeral. Don, a robust monarchist, put it wryly: "Suddenly it dawned on them that they had come a cropper. I think the Queen is thinking 'Thank God Diana's gone'. The aggro she would have caused us later. It is like your son marries someone you don't like and you go along with it."

"She was trying to close the door

after the horse had bolted," Alan lobbed in.

Curiously, there is a feeling that Diana's death in the Paris car crash happened "at the right time" and that she had grown "too powerful". From Jane and James, the two youngest members of the focus group, there is also sympathy for the predicament the royal family found itself in back in September 1997.

Until Diana's death Downing Street had played no serious role in modernising the monarchy — although John Major had discussed the proposal for the Queen to pay tax and had acted as a counsellor in the break-up of Prince Charles's marriage. Instead, the monarchy was modernising itself, but with the speed of an elderly tortoise.

One month before the fatal car crash the Way Ahead Group met for one of its twice-yearly get-togethers. The mood was congratulatory. The group comprised the

Queen, Prince Philip, Prince Charles, Princes Andrew and Edward and the Princess Royal, together with Sir Robert Fellowes, the Queen's private secretary, his deputy, Robert Janvrin, Charles's private secretary, Stephen Lamport, and the Keeper of the Privy Purse, Michael Peat.

Since it was set up the Way Ahead Group had scored several PR coups. The Queen had agreed to pay tax; open Buckingham Palace to the paying public; decommission the royal yacht and limit the Civil List. Many members of the group saw little reason for further meetings and felt the monarchy modernisation programme had reached the end of the road. The Queen, Prince Philip and Sir Robert Fellowes were the most cautious. Prince Charles and Princess Anne were still keen to carry on.

And yet all this appears not to be enough. There is wide-spread

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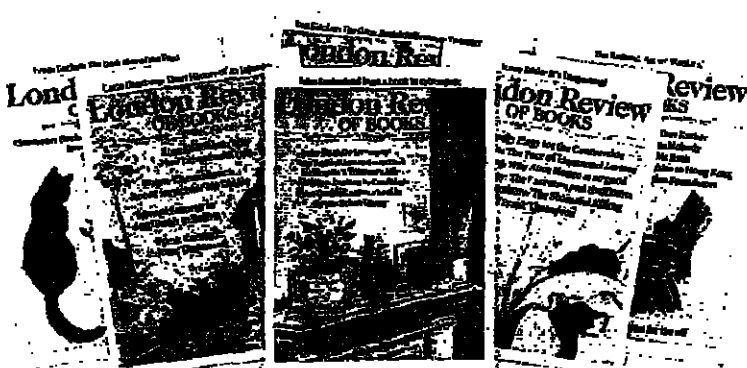
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# Take me to your leader writer



**IAN MAYES**  
**OPEN DOOR**

THE LEADER column in the Guardian is the last refuge of the anonymous. Why a reader writes to ask, do the leaders remain unsigned when they are totally surrounded by signed articles, often (like this one) supported by the author's photograph? Isn't it, well, a bit old-fashioned? After all, some one must write them. Or is there a leader writers' laboratory where, gurgling and belching behind locked doors, the collective wisdom is distilled? Prompted by this I attended the daily conference of leader writers with the editor a couple of times this week, first to listen to their deliberations and then to seek their views on anonymity. The anonymous was unanimous that that was the way they wanted to keep it.

The Guardian at present has four leader writers, all male, and all with other responsibilities in the paper. In addition to them, the editor writes leaders occasionally, and from time to time experts, male or female, on the staff of the paper are invited to contribute. Outside experts are now never asked, although it certainly happened in the Guardian's youth in the mid-19th century, and continued well into living memory. In the first half of this century, for example, R H Tawney, the guru of the London School of Economics, passed anonymously through the leader columns, in the process exercising some influence on the paper's policies.

For C P Scott, the great editor who conducted the paper for 57 years to 1933 — I quote from Geoffrey Taylor's *Changing Faces: A History of the Guardian 1858-88* (Fourth Estate, 1993) — "the paper's leading articles had been the prime purpose of its existence. They were the place where readers could expect to find every topical subject and some fairly arcane ones, fairly analysed and an opinion, forthright or tentative according to its importance and the evidence available, put forward."

They were, and still are, the place where the following beliefs of C P Scott could be expressed and reinforced: "One of the virtues, perhaps almost the chief virtue, of a newspaper is its independence. Whatever its position or character, at least it should have a soul of its own." (C P Scott 1846-1932: *The Making of The Manchester Guardian*, Frederick Muller, 1984).

The continuing belief in the value of anonymity in a world in which named writers are given a higher and higher profile, demands a certain sense of service, even sacrifice, in those

called upon to be leader writers. The longest-serving member of the Guardian's present quartet was told as he stood poised on the threshold of the leader writers' room, 26 years ago, "Don't go in there, you'll never be heard of again."

Another told me he is often asked by acquaintances, "Are you still with the Guardian?" One of the points we discussed was whether the anonymity to which we choose to adhere was off-putting for younger readers. They it was suggested, believe strongly in individuals before institutions, are likely to be extremely sceptical about the validity of a collective voice, and probably demand the frankness implied in the revelation of the writer's identity.

We don't know whether any of that is true. It was not, in any case, felt to constitute an argument strong enough to justify the abandonment of anonymity. One of the reasons why anonymity was considered to be still of value was the frequency of attacks on it by politicians. Some of them clearly feel that the force of an argument — that is, one with which they disagree — is diminished if it can be attributed to a particular writer rather than to the paper.

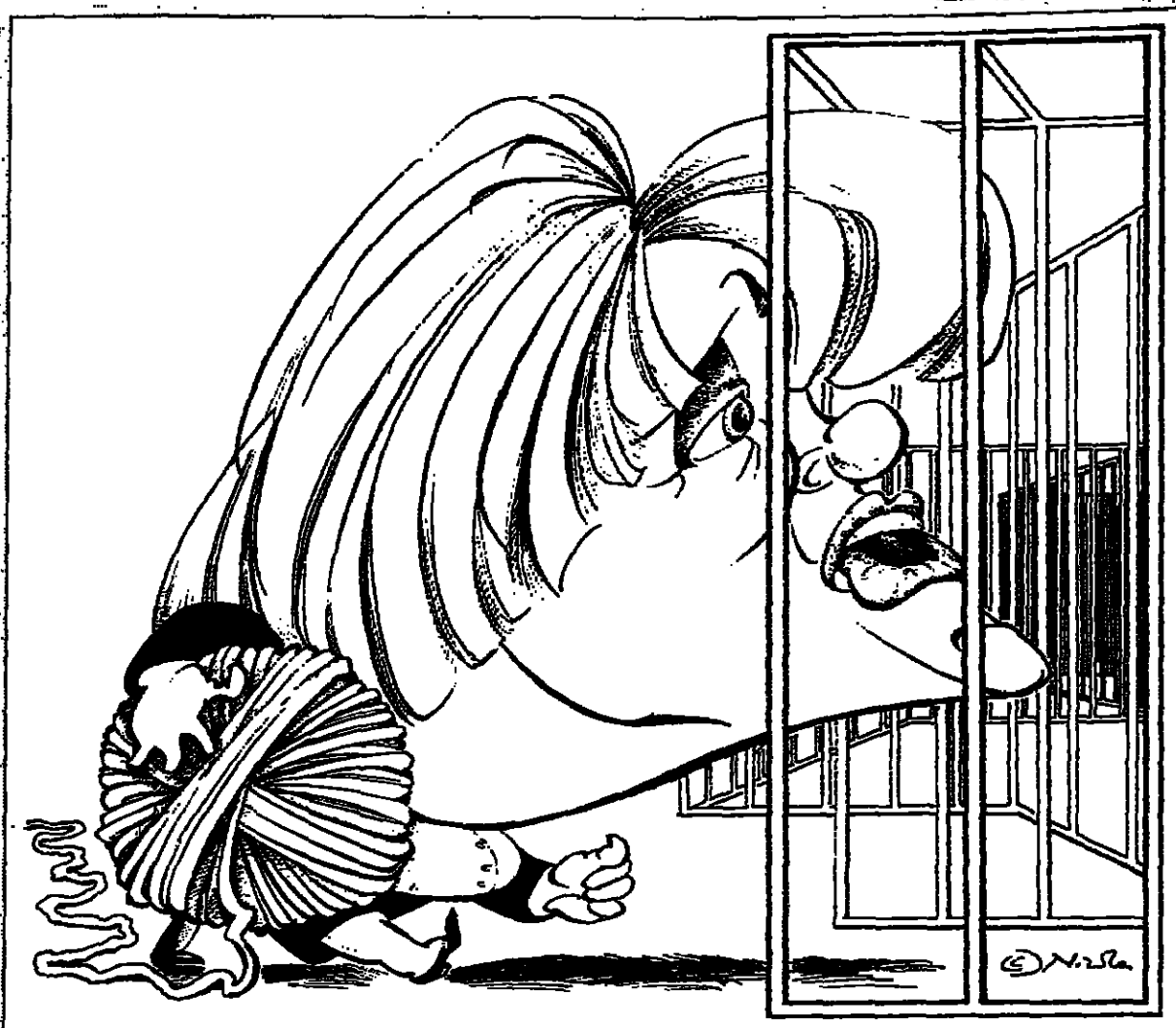
Quite recently in an interview on Channel Four News, David Blunkett, seeking to reject a view expressed in a leader, said that wasn't the Guardian but "only [so-and-so] who has always been bad with statistics and needs to go back to university". A month later, on a visit to the Guardian he apologised profusely to the leader writer he had named.

The point is, that in a certain sense the leaders are the collective view of the paper. The subjects, usually three, are chosen at the conference every day from the much larger number of ideas suggested. They are roughly outlined and briefly discussed. They are read by the editor or his deputy before publication.

The editor, having listened to the discussions this week, said in his view the unsigned leader represented a permanent element of continuity in the paper, a link with the Guardian's history and a reflection of the historic set of values the paper represented. The leader writer had access to an amazing body of information and expertise in the paper's own journalists. Leaders came with the authority of the paper behind them. Signing them, everyone agreed, was not the thing to do.

The ideal leader, a former leader writer told me, should be well-researched, succinctly expressed and elegantly written. His words reminded me of Boswell's description of Dr Johnson. "[He] did not strut or stand on tiptoe: he only did not stoop."

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 9887. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk



## THE WEEK INTO THE LION'S DEN

Going into a cage for a photo opportunity with several carnivorous felines, each the size of a large motorbike has never quite been a recommended health procedure, putting your head in the mouth of "one of them, still less so."

Added to that the fact that running a circus with what are supposed to be wild animals makes being Bernard Manning seem positively PC, and it is understandable why sympathy for circus trainer Richard Chipperfield, maned by a tiger, called Arnold in Florida, and for his brother Graham, who gutted Arnold down and now faces police charges, was a little thin on the ground this week.

Yet when the doughy Mr Mowbray went into the Mecca with dozens of far more ferocious and malicious creatures in the form of Loyalist terrorist prisoners, few regarded her as anything but courageous. Going into the lions' den in her case was more Daniel-like, more realistic, perhaps, than Chipperfield's ill-fated journey.

As murderer Michael Stone put it, in a week when quoting killers on matters political seemed to be the norm, "In my eyes, she has more gumption than all the other secretaries of state put together". Praise indeed.

The Rank Group, meanwhile, probably had no sense at all of putting itself metaphorically in the lions' den when it opened a new bingo hall in Luton. Beds. It is a measure of corporate Britain's dullness of wit that having presumably

noticed that Luton has one of the most concentrated Muslim populations in the UK, Rank proceeded to put up a big electric sign proclaiming the bingo hall's name — Mecca — and expect no reaction.

Not altogether surprisingly, Luton's Muslims were displeased at a gambling establishment being named after Islam's holy city, and the sign was petrol bombed, apparently by militant young Muslims.

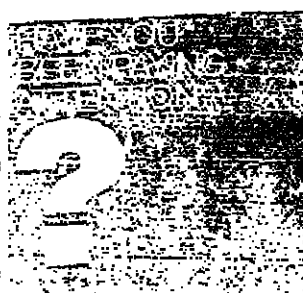
On Christmas Day, 15 windows were smashed in a similarly-motivated attack. Community leaders held talks during the week with the company in the hope of agreeing an alternative to such Rank insensitivity.

Another unwitting, though by no means unwilling, volunteer into the lions' den was insurance agent John McGuire of Milford Haven. Mr McGuire, who is 50, is treasurer of the town's Welsh League sixth division rugby club, and was on the coach with

the boys to a game at Pwllheli when it was noticed that they were a man short. The captain told Mr McGuire accordingly that he would be playing; and although, as he says, he had never touched a rugby ball in his life, he put on some spare boots and was positioned on the left wing. Milford Haven went on to lose by what is said to be a league record of 135 points to nil. Surely it couldn't have been entirely one winger's fault, one might wonder?

A point which that fine Sunday Times columnist AA Gill might (or perhaps might not) be keen to make. Gill is who recently referred in a piece to the Welsh as "dark, ugly, pugnacious little trolls", and for his trouble has been reported to the Commission for Racial Equality. Ironically, because at Milford Haven, they're looking for a few chaps fitting that very description as reserve wingers.

Jonathan Margolis



- 1 Presuming it is not Mr Livingstone, who or what is "Red Ken"?
- 2 What is ex-American civil servant, Valdas Adamkus, 71, going to do with his retirement?
- 3 Who confirmed that he would be putting himself up for election as the "First Minister of Scotland"?
- 4 Whose husband thinks she is a turner?
- 5 "Have a nice day?" For whom is this phrase most stressful?
- 6 To which of their romantic haunts are Bill and Hillary Clinton planning a sentimental return?
- 7 Who is the most borrowed author from public libraries?
- 8 Why is NASA up?
- 9 So why is Patrick Moore down?
- 10 What is John Prescott wheedling mad about?
- 11 What may Will Carling be giving up?
- 12 And what is this Carling dropping?
- 13 Which Great Dane became less great this week?
- 14 What was of grave concern to many this week?
- 15 Which sportsman is going to join Friends star Jennifer Aniston in promoting Elvive hair products?

Answers below Theme of the Week.



**Overstatement of the Week:**  
"It's just like Beirut." A resident of Sussex seaside town of Selsey after it was hit by a freak tornado.

**The John Motson Mildly Racist Comment of the Week Award:**  
To Channel 5 for its newspaper advert promoting its evening news programme. "Despite his name, it reads, 'Trevor McDonald isn't Scottish. Kirsty Young is.'"

**Ambiguity of the Week:**  
To Italian Count Gaddo della Gherardesca, who spoke of his relationship with Fergie whom he has entertained at his castle in the Tuscan hills. He said: "Ours is only a friendship — a very strong friendship. It is a bodily relationship, but not in the physical sense."

**Charm of the Week:**  
To Noel Gallagher for his fond thoughts on his fans. "I get kids outside the gates saying, 'Can I take a picture of your house?'"

- a) Edinburgh
- b) Whitewater
- c) Oxford
- d) Washington
- a) Sir Bobby Charlton
- b) Frank Lebon
- c) Ian Wright
- d) David Glenister
- Gabrielle Morris

And I say, "You f---ing paid for it, course you can."

**Candid Comment of the Week:**  
To Jack Straw, for his remark while visiting Brinsford Young Offenders Institute, near Wolverhampton: "If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans. I told him I was planning a quiet Christmas."

**Romantic of the Week:**  
To OJ Simpson, for telling a journalist that he had killed his wife Nicole "if it would have been because I loved her very much."

**Naughty Boy of the Week:**  
To Liam Gallagher, for his reaction to a nun when he took his five-year-old step-son James to school. "I met his new teacher — this old nun — and I nearly sh--- me pants. I thought she was gonna kick me or keep me behind in detention."

**Drugs Bore of the Week:**  
To Will Self, for writing in the Times on visiting a health clinic: "Sister Green wanted to take an exhaustive medical history from me. Such were the picaresqueries of my youth that an exhaustive medical history would include mention of more pharmaceutical compounds than an edition of the British Formulary." Yawn.

## Palace versus people

Page 13 spread resentment, according to the focus group, at the way the royals are financed with taxpayers' money. Pat, who grew up pasting stories about the young Queen Elizabeth into a childhood scrapbook, puts it like this: "We all had it hard with the recession. They have not suffered in any way. I think a lot of people have seen them get richer while others get poorer."

Alan, the only person in the room who wants the monarchy abolished, says the Windsor should pay tax on all of their assets like "other rich people". There is also a general feeling that the royal family is too numerous. "There are too many hangers-on," Jean chips in.

Only Jane supports the Civil List in its present form. "The rest of our tax goes to people who can't be bothered to get off their backside and go to work," she says, reaching for a crisp.

Diana's death on August 31 last year changed everything. It plunged the monarchy into its worst period of turbulence since the abdication crisis of 1936. Confronted with a freefall in popularity, the royal family engaged in one of the fastest turn-arounds in history. The Way Ahead group, not due to meet again until December, was hurriedly reconvened and has had some new personnel, a new agenda and now meets monthly.

The change — despite frequent denials — came from Tony Blair. It was he who suggested a "royal make-over". The main link with Labour was with Peter Mandelson, first as backbench MP and then as Minister without Portfolio. He had for some time been close to Prince Charles, dined regularly with his aides and was on the side of modernisation — making it clear privately that he had no time for the old-style royal courtier establishment led by Sir Robert.

Already some of the symbols which surround the royal family are changing, though not quickly enough for the focus group



Prince Charles and his sons on the slopes at Klosters... a new tough stance was taken with the paparazzi

panel. The royal yacht Britannia, decommissioned last month, is regarded by most in the group as an antique emblem of privilege. Towards the end of the session, with the bottle of Piesporter only half drunk, the group is asked to draw up two lists of what Prince Charles and the Queen think and what they actually say.

"Why can't we have Britannia back?" is the plaintive remark attributed to Charles. The Queen, meanwhile, is credited with thinking: "Mission impossible — on a loser."

The fact that the Queen never takes her gloves off to shake hands with the masses rankles. And the

proverbial view that the royals have too many palaces resonates with everyone apart from Don and Jane. They are worried that tourism might suffer if historic homes such as Buckingham Palace or Sandringham are flopped off.

These are all issues which have recently been addressed in a secret briefing paper written for the Palace by Alastair Campbell, the prime minister's press secretary. After Diana's death, Tony Blair became directly involved in dealing with the Queen and as a result Campbell became the senior link with royal courtiers. It is Campbell who is credited with the idea of the "People's Monarchy". His internal paper recommends a comprehensive reform programme, including the setting up of royal focus groups and the opening up of historic palaces to the public. The former Daily Mirror journalist has new suggestions on how the Windsors can become "more touchy-feely".

He is also credited with much of the populist composition of the Queen's Speech to celebrate her Golden Wedding at the Banqueting Hall last November. It was during the banquet — before the Mori

story broke, but after the research had been secretly commissioned — that the Queen announced the royal family would try hard to "read" the message of public opinion, a message often "obscured" by "deference and rhetoric".

The royals can take some comfort from the fact that Earl Spencer has licensed the focus group by his decision to charge £9.50 to visit Diana's grave at the Althorp estate in Northamptonshire. "I'm a cynic, but I dread to think what Earl Spencer will do with the money when he gets it," Don said. "By the time you take out running costs and a few lunches, the money will go down by 50 percent."

The Blairification of the royal family comes as the palace dramatically raises its own PR game. Prince Charles's trip to South Africa three months ago was a carefully calibrated public relations triumph. The successful template is to be repeated on the prince's next foreign trip to Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan in February.

A special plane chartered by Buckingham Palace will fly the press corps from the UK to the Indian sub-continent; a gesture unthinkable a decade ago. Over on

the ski slopes of Klosters, meanwhile, a new "naming and shaming" policy was introduced for the first time by palace aides over the New Year to curb the activities of renegade paparazzi. The unfortunate Jean-Pierre Rey was frog-marched out of a Swiss hotel by royal bodyguards after trying to snap Prince Charles and his sons from a toilet.

Within the focus group, there is much enthusiasm for the young Princes William and Harry. The fashionable but improbable "Williamist" notion that the throne might skip a generation, by-passing Charles, finds some support. But James, aged 19, and Jane, 27, argue that it would be absurd to burden the young Prince William in such a way.

As the evening draws to a close, the talk turns inevitably to royal adultery. The conversation begins with Alan pointing out that tourists still come to visit Hampton Court, even though Henry VIII no longer lives there. Don moves rapidly on from Henry VIII to royal infidelity in general. "From 1400 you find a King that has not got birds on the side," he declares. On the sofa, Jane bounces up. "It

isn't OK in the 20th century," she says. "You don't want to sleep with him if he's been putting it around."

Such blunt speaking is a world removed from Buckingham Palace. Here, modest changes are afoot. Behind the ornamental gates, there has been a minor coup in favour of the modernisers. Sir Robert Fellowes, is now playing a less pivotal role and is expected to retire later this year, making way for his newly-enbodied and modernising deputy Sir Robert Jarrin. Jarrin is now more in charge of the royal agenda.

Even more important is the retirement of the Earl of Airlie as Lord Chamberlain, traditionally a key adviser to the Queen, and his replacement by Lord Camoys. Palace sources say that Lord Camoys is the most radical of the royal advisers. His proposals go further than Prince Charles and the Princess Royal in wanting to open up the monarchy and end what is left of its mystique.

His thinking also extends much further than the Queen's, who remains very cautious about change. The internal agenda for reform currently extends to reviewing royal engagements, and considering which minor royals might be tactfully pensioned off.

Back in West Wickham — where, in a classic bourgeois revolt the residents recently protested about a new Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise — almost all the tortilla chips have been eaten. The focus group is about to go home. Dianne will later have to vacuum under the table, around the fake log fire, along the bottom of the floral curtains, and behind the comfy sofa. What, then, is Mr Worcester of Mori likely to tell the Queen?

That there is no great clamour for a republic, certainly, but that the monarchy is widely perceived as being stuffy, out of date and out of touch. That the general public no longer think of the royal family as an institution, but rather as familiar characters in a rather messy soap opera. That there have to be major structural changes to Windsor finances, so the royal family acquires the reputation of being good, ordinary taxpayers. And that she might consider scrapping the Civil List entirely. That the "touchy-feely" style recommended by A. Campbell be adopted forthwith.

And finally, ma'am, that it would be a good idea if you took off your gloves.

## What we want from the royals...



Mrs Patsy Jones, aged 49, reserpt manager for a school, Social class B.



Mr Don Carpenter, aged 62, retired bank manager, Maverick.



Mrs Jean Collis, aged 51, administration assistant in a manufacturing company.



Mr Alan Fletcher, aged 61, retired electrical engineer, Social class B.



Miss Jane Wallace, aged 27, waitress, Social class D.



Mr James Davis, aged 19, foreign languages student at Bristol University.

سكنا من الجول



He may be the scourge of film censors but film director Michael Winner still believes in fairies

# Man of singular passions

INTERVIEW BY  
SABINE DURRANT

"I AM the greatest law and order freak in the world. I believe in shooting rapists. I believe in shooting child molesters. I believe in putting people in prison. If someone hits an old lady with an iron bar he ain't going to his mother old lady with an iron bar if he's in prison."

The film director Michael Winner who, as he will proudly tell you, runs the Police Memorial Trust, is sitting in a director's chair in the private cinema that occupies part of the basement of his 46-room house in Holland Park in London. It is much plusher than the Odeon down the road, with plush sofas and cushions; there are even little squares of spare carpet under the legs of a coffee table to protect the carpet beneath. It is lined with movie stills, playbills and framed photographs of a younger Winner — curly hair and raffish grin — with arms around Marlon Brando, Faye Dunaway, Robert Mitchum, Anthony Hopkins.

An older Winner, Barbados tan reddening the folds of his 62-year-old face, his now thinning white hair tinged with yellow, is talking about this week's Home Office report which reopened the debate about crime and screen violence. "It's a witch hunt," he says wheezing. "Can anybody seriously believe that if you removed 20 per cent of violence from all films and television a mugger would wake up in Britain the next day and say 'I'm not going to mug anybody today? We are already the most censored country in the free world. Films that can be seen uncensored in Switzerland, Italy and France are cut to ribbons here. You don't walk through Switzerland and find gangs of thugs rushing out of the chalets and bonking you with Swiss walking sticks? Piffle!"

Society, he says, was much more violent in Victorian times. "Trollope wrote about people walking through London parks and being garrotted from behind. Throttling and garrotting was very common in London parks. Now you tell me the last time someone was throttled or garrotted in a London park! It's all absolute nonsense!"

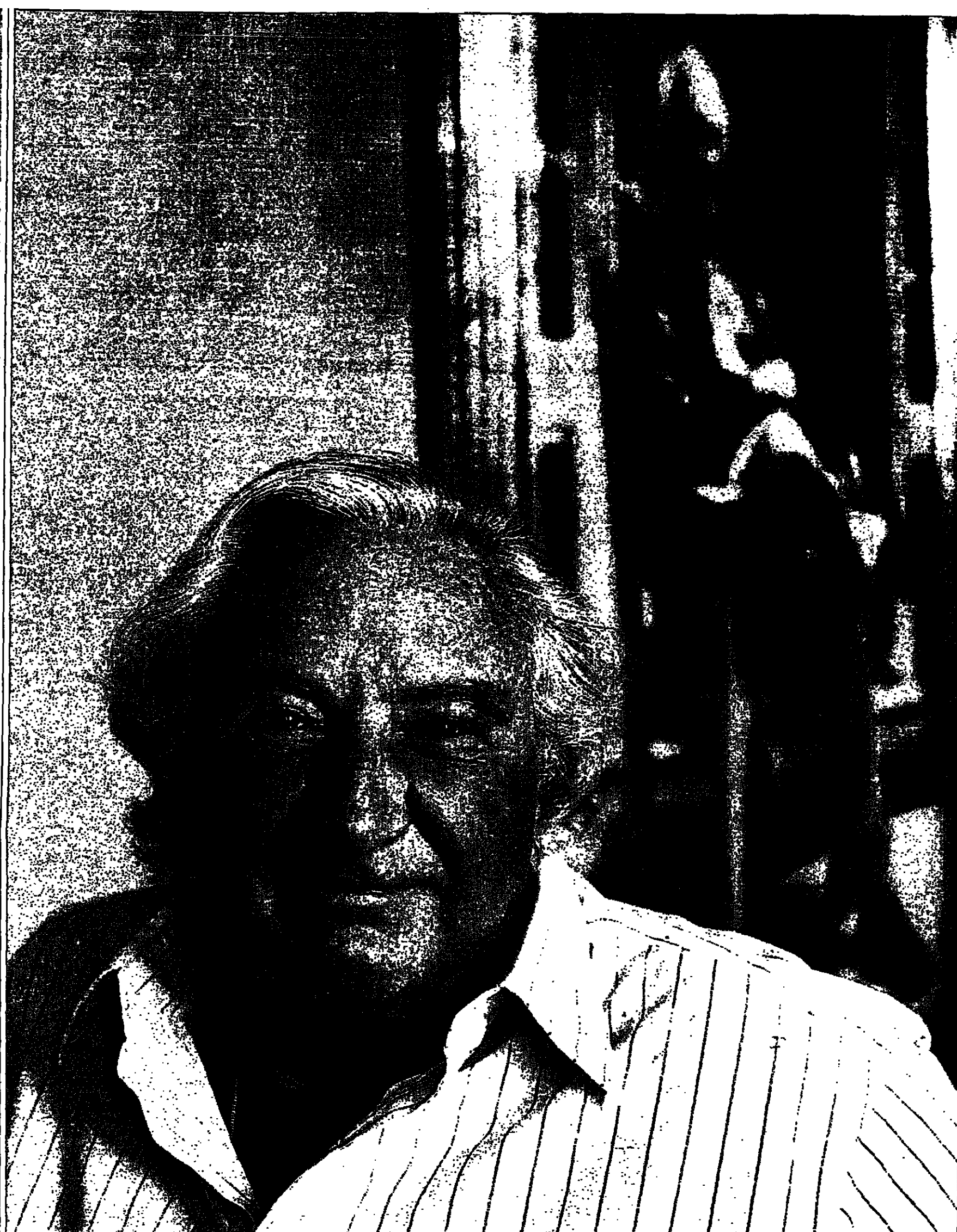
Michael Winner has made about 30 feature films in his 42-year career, many of them comedies but he is best known for *Death Wish*, about a man (played by Charles Bronson) who one day has enough and starts killing people. Also for *Death Wish 2* and *Death Wish 3*. "People like a good old yarn about the conquering of evil by good," he says. "You can't only have stories about flower arranging and people doing good."

His most recent film was *Dirty Weekend*, in which a woman (played by Lia Williams) one day has enough and starts killing people. His next film, *Parting Shots*, is a bit of a departure. It's about a man who finds out he has six weeks to live and decides to take with him five of the people who have most annoyed him. "But you don't see people being killed. Like in *Kind Hearts And Coronets*, you don't see any sign of death."

*Parting Shots* stars John Cleese, Diana Rigg, Joanna Lumley, Ben Kingsley, Bob Hoskins and Felicity Kendal. Just as it can be a bit of a surprise to meet someone who has seen a Winner movie, it's also rather a shock that so many people will agree to be in one. "Most of them are close friends," he says.

Michael Winner occupies an odd place in our national life. All those films and yet he's more renowned for his opinions thundering forth from Winner's Dinners in the Sunday Times, his column in the *News Of The World*, in every magazine questionnaire from *My Week* to *My Ucer* — than his work. So many close friends ("every actor I've wanted to be friends with, I have," and yet all alone in this huge, antique-crammed house behind its high walls.

He's despised for being Mr. Remarque as much as he is for his wealth — the money he has made



That's me, that is... Film director Michael Winner in front of a wall-size portrait of himself — "That's a serious painting"

PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN MCCABE

from films swills around in the bank, along with the proceeds of the property business he inherited in 1972 and which he sold at the height of the market in 1988. He's a portly middle-aged man, single, whose love life, from his self-professed low sperm count to the size of his Y-fronts, continues to be the subject of tabloid interest. "The people I've been with have all been very nice except one," he says, "who was a monster."

Most of all, though, he's famous for his in-your-face rudeness. He's said to be vile to his crews. He's certainly horrid in a bombastic way to his star, "DIANA," he keeps yelling into an intercom. "What's the name of my secretary?"

And that reminds him of when he blew up a car in Piccadilly Circus for *You Must Be Joking* in 1964. "The police came to arrest everybody and they said to me, 'Who's in charge?' And I said, 'I've no idea, I'm just shopping. It's an absolute disgrace, I've just come here to shop, and I walked away.' He laughs heartily.

It's all a damn good joke, but he'll sue the arse off you if you misrepresent him. He speaks into a Dictaphone because he doesn't trust journalists not to misquote him. "We've got a file of apologies that bulges," he says.

So why does he remind you of the Wizard of Oz, a small, fat man shouting into a microphone? He

seems to be out of breath much of the time, a legacy perhaps of the 15 Havana cigars he used to smoke a day before a recent heart operation. "Not a heart attack dear, blocked arteries. Please get that right."

Is he a monster or just pretending to be one? He seems to have a fondness for those who see through him. He's a favourite target of the Guardian diarist Matthew Norman. "Oh I like Matthew, dear," he says, smiling. His eyes disappearing. And the person he's nicest about during the whole interview is the headteacher of the crammer he went to when he was 17, who got him into Cambridge. "She said, 'You are

absolutely illiterate. She said, 'You can't read; you can't write.' She said, 'You are illiterate.' Wonderful woman."

He's touchingly proud of his house, which he bought from his parents in 1972. Ask nicely and he'll show you around, up past the gym and the pool, along the hall carpet with its black hotel margins, through a chain of drawing-rooms, rich with sculptures, antiques, oil paintings and expensive knick-knacks, up the central staircase, past the original E H Shepard and Arthur Rackman illustrations, and the wall-size portrait of Winner by Peter Edwards ("That's a serious painting") and into the bedroom.

It was here, in the light shining through the magnificent windows, that the Victorian artist Sir Luke Fildes used to paint, and here that Winner watches telly, reads and lies in an enormous beige bed. It's a very colourful room, the carpet and the walls are complicatedly flowered. There's a teddy bear on the counterpane and a row of stuffed toys, including a tattered Humpty Dumpty, on a window sill.

Does the house ever get burgled? "Used to, not now dear. There's nothing to take. No darling. Burglars want jewellery; they want a wife with a Rolex watch, they don't want watercolours by Arthur Rackham." Winner has been collecting children's paintings since it was unfashionable to do so. "Twenty or 30 years ago the dealers laughed at me, I said, 'But these are one-offs. Christopher Robin bumping Winnie the Pooh down the stairs is one of the most famous pictures in the history of children's literature. How can it not be a snip at 18 grand?'"

But wouldn't he too rather have a wife with a Rolex watch? "I suppose I am a bit of a one-man band," he says. "It is very, very unusual to be 60 and never having been married and not being a homosexual." Does he wish he had had children? "I somewhat regret that." He gives a huge creaking sigh.

Winner used to date the actress Jenny Seagrove, but for the past four years or so has been seeing

Vanessa Perry, 30, a dancer he met when she auditioned, unsuccessfully for *Dirty Weekend*. "The press girlfriend is an absolute delight. Lovely girl." Might they get married? "Anything is possible."

You wonder a bit about his own childhood, this man who longs to see fairies at the bottom of the garden ("I can't think of anything nicer than to see an elf"). He's an only child, his mother was a gambler, who frittered away £7 million of his father's fortune in casinos at Cannes. Was Winner a happy child? He is silent for a while and then says: "I was moderately happy at school." (He went to St Christopher's, Leitchworth: "A Quaker, socialist, do-good, open-toed sandals, Bernard Shaw-type school".)

What about at home? Another pause, in which he gives out a long, rattly exhalation of breath like a train arriving at a station. "I was ill at ease at home," he says eventually. "My mother didn't take much interest in me, she was affectionate in bursts. And I didn't fit into the smartly dressed young Jewish set I was introduced to — the girls were all over made up, very controlled. I was an alien in that society and I was an alien at school. So I retreated into cinema and then at age 14 by chance I got a showbiz column and was meeting Louis Armstrong and having dinner with Bob Hope. And that was a life of my own."

Since then, of course, he has met and made friends with many other people: "Orson Welles, Mitchum, Jimmy Stewart — not a close friend but a friend. Ava Gardner, Faye Dunaway, Sophia Loren, Lancaster, Bronson." And "my friend" Marlon Brando of course.

"Brando's a great joke player. The jokes he's played on me... I couldn't start to tell you, the jokes he's played on me."

So is Winner the sociable out a lot? He is suddenly rather quiet again. "I'm a loner," he says with a tiny touch of self-pity. "I very seldom go out at all. I'm probably here four nights a week." He rattles. "I'm very fond of Diana Rigg and Joanna Lumley, they're incredible people, but I don't see them that often, you know, but when you do you just pick up. I don't know who spend time with really." There's another long pause and then he adds, "Myself."

**'You don't walk through Switzerland and find gangs of thugs bonking you with walking sticks'**

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SIMON  
HOGGART'S  
WEEK

Disney does it for Mandy but will it work for Labour too?

DURING the last election I went to Redcar, which is a depressed seaside resort in the North-east and where, as a small child, I used to live. In the most downmarket Marks & Spencer I've ever seen (no men's clothing, and the food department seemed to sell mainly white bread and crisps) a poorly dressed but splendidly tanned woman was chatting to a friend on the check-out. "We're just back from a fortnight in Florida," she explained. "Disney World mostly," and I reflected briefly on our changing notions of poverty.

Anyhow, working-class people from Redcar can now go to Orlando, but until a week ago, Peter Mandelson — being rather better off — had never been there. Those of us who like the idea of the Millennium Dome will have been deeply depressed by his visit. Apparently the Minister without Portfolio was as thrilled as any nine-year-old by the park, saying he would use it as a "benchmark" for the Dome. He would import many of the

"almost infinite possibilities" he had seen there.

But successful though it is, and no doubt astonishing to someone seeing it for the first time, compared to other theme parks, such as Futuroscope near Poitiers, Disney World is antediluvian. You might as well design a car for the New Era by stripping down a Hillman Imp. The Epcot Centre, which is supposed — like the Dome — to give us a vision of the future, is especially silly. There are tableaux depicting housewives in moulded plastic clothes, like the cast from an early edition of *Star Trek*, giving orders to robots, who do the washing-up and ironing. Nothing dates more quickly than a vision of the future.

Disney theme parks have a lot in common with New Labour, in that they offer more than you actually get. Yes, all the wonderful rides are free once you've paid to get in, but they exact the price by making you queue for up to 90 minutes. So Disney customers are ideal New Labour voters — docile, tractable, patient and touchingly grateful for what they are given.

REMEMBER those annoying BT ads in which a little girl in a yellow mac asked innocently why people clog the roads by going into offices for work? I've been based at home for the past week, and very pleasant it's been, but it certainly hasn't got much work done. I envy those writers who describe their day in the Sunday mags. "Every morning I get up at 6am in our home, a converted nail forge in Wiltshire. Breakfast is a bowl of bran and an apple picked from our own trees. I hope to have around 5,000 words written by 12.30, when my Swedish wife Tig brings me a bowl of soup and a crusty roll from Mr Samways, our local baker, who is threatened by the dreadful new supermarket in Devizes. Then it's four more hours at the keyboard, before supper in front of the TV — we hate to miss EastEnders."

My life isn't remotely focused like that: 8.40 take son to school; 8.55 buy the other papers; 9.05 tackle difficult word puzzle in the Sun; 9.30 urgent need for cup of coffee; 9.35 stupid computer game will blank my mind, make it more

receptive for creative ideas; 10.05 teeth gone all furry — must brush; 10.10 friend rings; half an hour's work-related conversation, i.e. gossip; 11.05 get down at last to some solid work; 11.10 really must go out for Economist, get briefed on situation in Turkmenistan; 11.30

**'I'd have told him to get knotted,' says my informant. But these days few people dare to tell a person as powerful and influential as Alastair Campbell ever to get knotted**

remember tax deadline — have to find P60 in dunes of paper on desk; 12.05 phone office to ask for copy of P60; 12.15 watch end of Call My Bluff on TV, hope Sandi Toksvig will stimulate sparkling ideas;

12.35 only leftover chicken in fridge — quick visit to chippie saves time making sandwich; 1.00 World At One promises fascinating interview with Jacques Santer; 1.05 nap would be refreshing, get brain synapses fixing...

And why is it, that if you have two jobs on the go, the one which you must get done always seems less attractive than the one that could easily wait? Luckily I have to go back to the office on Monday, so I might do some work.

THANKS for your letters about Perfect Day and whether it is a coded song about drugs. The consensus seems to be that when Lou Reed wrote about drugs he didn't bother with elliptical allegories and came straight out with it. (As with *Walk On The Wild Side* which mentions transvestitism and oral sex.) So the song really is about the singer's splendid day with his best girl by his side, which is nice.

If you can get it, there's still a chance to catch up with the endless and sometimes hilarious tech-

nical glitches on the BBC News 24 cable channel. The "digital technology" means that the image — weatherpersons, interviewees, star newscasters Gavin Sater — sometimes freezes on screen in mid-sentence, even when they're on live. What they have to say is then sampled, a second here and a second there, so the weather goes: "rain... mild... Shetland... umbrellas... goodbye."

WE learn that Margaret Cook was told her marriage to Robin Cook was over after he took a call on his mobile from Alastair Campbell. The Downing Street press secretary told Mr Cook that the News Of The World had the story of his affair. I gather from a colleague of Mr Cook's that it went even further: Mr Campbell presented him with a direct ultimatum: choose your mistress or your wife, now. "I'd have told him to get knotted," says my informant. But then these days few people dare to tell a person as powerful and influential as Alastair Campbell ever to get knotted.





# Chewing the fat

**HEAD TO HEAD: HEALTH OR HEDONISM? SHOULD WE HEED THE FITNESS POLICE?**



**Yes**  
Mr Motivator  
Fitness guru



**No**  
Richard Klein  
Writer and hedonist

**Dear Mr Motivator,**

It's January and the health police are out in force. Ready to prey on our guilt, they tell us that all the good things we swallowed last month are probably killing us. They also have a diet they want to sell or a new gimmick to stop smoking, or an exercise plan you can have on small instalments.

No one is suggesting we don't need a little Lent in our lives after the Saturnian festivities. Gluttony after all, is a sin. Since Antiquity a little self-denial after excess has been considered to be a good thing. But we shouldn't be too ready to forget that Christmas and New Year are also about stuffing — our birds and our stockings and our guts with all the good and delicious things to eat and smoke and drink that God's Green Earth provides.

There's no time we need more to let go and pig out than at the darkest moment of the year, when the sun goes deep into gloom and we crave its life-giving beneficence in all the delicious forms where its energy is stored. Our ancestors understood.

the psychic need for excess. Exceeding your limits is what the holidays are all about. Otherwise, how would we ever learn what our limits are?

So don't let the health and fitness nazis ruin your month. If you listen closely you'll hear how their warnings about our health always have a moralising edge. Behind every nutritionist and fitness trainer is a priest, who views the body as a "temple" not to be defiled by whatever tastes good and gives pleasure. Remember, everyone agrees, the healthiest thing you can do for yourself is be happy.

Yours sincerely,  
Richard Klein,  
author *Eat Fat and Cigarettes* are Sublime

**Dear Richard Klein,**

It is wonderful to enjoy Christmas, to eat, stuff your face and party well. A little bit of what you fancy does you no harm. But in all things, if you overdo it there will be a price to pay. In olden times when the weather was dark and dismal, man needed extra fat to keep himself

warm. Clothing and housing was basic compared to the cars, computers, the hypermarket, TV shopping and the dreaded remote control we have now. When the weather changed and supplies had run low, man went out to do physical activities, such as hunting and foraging, which quickly used up any excess body fat. I am sure you would have noticed that all the pictures of man in olden times shows him as a lean, muscular machine.

All this non-physical, fast-food, over-indulgent lifestyle has caused many of the health problems of today. We are a democracy and as such we do have a choice as long as our choices do not directly affect or inconvenience other people.

My message is clear. Look in the mirror and like what you see. But if you don't, and you want to make some adjustments then do so, but in all things do it with a happy frame of mind. Remember! You have one body and if you look after it, it will last a lifetime.

Yours in health and fitness,  
Mr Motivator (Derrick Evans)

**Dear Mr Motivator,**

Let's talk about your mirror, and mine. You told me all I had to do was "look in the mirror and like what I see". You assume that I probably won't like it very much, unless I look like a "lean, muscular machine". But where do ideas of beauty come from?

If I were living 90 years ago in America, I would probably be worrying that I didn't look fat enough. After all, back then, Diamond Jim Brady, a paragon of his age, had a stomach that was a hairy frame. President Taft weighed over 350lb at his inauguration. And Lillian Russell, the most beautiful woman of her age, was famous for her appetite. People wrote books like *"How To Become Plump"*.

Now, to become plump? It's a funny question, when you consider the history of art in the West. Most painters have thought that fat women were beautiful and skinny ones were unhealthy or disturbed. Think of Rubens or Renoir, to start with, men who greatly admired the power and dignity, not to mention

the sensual loveliness of fat.

Don't you think it's time we looked in the mirror and started loving our fat? You are your fat, it's what you bring to the table. It goes up and down in life. Maybe if we loved fat more, we wouldn't obsess so much about thin, which only seems to be making us fatter grow fatter faster.

Your fat friend,  
Richard Klein

**Dear Richard,**

It never occurred to me that your reflection would be lean, mean or muscular. I know that larger people can be very beautiful.

But Richard my thing about life is not whether you're fat or thin. I'm into the balance between mind, soul and body, which is total well-being. So many people study Buddhism and meditation. Why? Maybe because they want to have a more meaningful view of life, rather than the superficial messages that bombard us each day. I believe control of my life starts with the mind, and if the focus of my mind is clear then all things are possible.

If my soul is at peace with God then I know that at least when I die, I will go to heaven. And if I have respected my body in all things then surely I have a greater chance of fulfilling my purpose on this earth.

We owe it to ourselves, our families and mankind, to find out more about the secrets of well-being, and we should ensure that the message is heard and absorbed. Then, hopefully, the recipients will be able to improve their lives, and strive for their own level of well-being. Remember, you cannot control the length of your life, but you can control its breadth, depth, and height.

Yours,  
Derrick

**Dear Mr Motivator**

All I can say is, Amen. I'd only add that I wish there were more motivators like you, who inspire us with edifying thoughts, and fewer health nazis. You'll excuse the term. Of course, these "nazis" aren't malevolent and don't mean to do us any harm — on the contrary. They live and breathe in the absolute assur-

ance that what they would like us to be forced to do is good for our health and bracing for our morale. But the comparison works in the sense that Nazis used health as a way of imparting moral imperatives and disciplining the population.

They are everywhere. They are nutritionists and personal trainers, diet doctors and journalists, who make a living telling us what's good for us and what will happen to us if we disobey their orders. The orders are constantly changing, but the absolute certainty of their own truth never changes in these "nazis": they always know what's good for everyone at all times. The moral lesson they want to impress on us is clear: the flesh if it isn't purified is unclean. Sacrifice! Be healthy or die! Some of us pigs figure that life is a banquet and God gave us these good things to pig out on. We don't want to pig out, we want to drop from the bottles of champagne that still litter the room, and raising one, wish you the happiest, healthiest New Year.

Yours,  
Richard

**Dear Richard,**

I too hate those health nazis because they isolate the very people that they are trying to reach. From the moment I went on the well-being trail I believed that to get people's attention, the healthy message had to be dressed up in a sugary coating. It had to be digestible to people in general, from all walks of life. The young and not so young, the able and the not so able, male and female, the "I don't want to listen" to me, sir, if I suck the last drop from the bottles of champagne that still litter the room, and raising one, wish you the happiest, healthiest New Year.

Now, after all this my apple pie and custard is begging me to eat it, so here's to a healthy conclusion. By the way, it's not the ups and downs of life that bothers the average person — it's the jerks!

Regards,  
Derrick

**JEREMY HARDY**

## Education — it's time to get down to business

I am glad that the Government has come up with a scheme to involve the business community in education in a way they will approve of. The only way of involving them which I'd been able to come up with entailed taking away their money and giving it to schools, and I don't think they'd like that. Admittedly, there wouldn't be much in it for them. The Government's approach, giving them a role in running Education Action Zones, will not only delight them, it will also teach children the valuable lesson that society is run by and for the business community.

The last government cherished hopes of dedicating all education to the requirements of employers. Thatcher, especially fought hard to cleanse Britain of the idea that the purpose of schooling is the enrichment of lives. She hated the thought of people knowing too much — or knowing anything at all that their boss didn't need them to know. New Labour seeks to legitimise this ethos.

Blair established immediately on coming into office his belief that a man's success in business gives him the right to take part in government. This, of course, is not a new idea. The consensus that the people should choose their own rulers is quite a recent one. Until the 19th century an MP was either chosen by the richest people in the constituency or simply happened to be the richest person in the constituency. And one of the complaints of the 1960s civil rights movement in Northern Ireland was that businessmen at that time were allowed two votes each, one at home and one at the office.

It is now widely stated that Blair idolises rich people. But he has got off too lightly because this affection is so often represented as an adolescent crush. If he had filled the Cabinet with pop stars and footballers, one might believe this, and it might be possible to look upon him in a kinder way. It would be quite sweet to have a new Premier who tells all his school friends: "Of course I'm not going to forget you. I want you all to come and live with me in Number Ten Downing Street!"

But Tony Blair is not driven by wide-eyed innocence, nor even by Thatcher's crazed vandalism and philistinism. Thatcher handed over public sector services to private sector managers because she didn't care what happened to them. Only a person with an instinctive dislike of the NHS would put it in the hands of men who are used to running biscuit factories. What's frightening about Blair is that he appears genuinely to believe that these are the best people to run things.

Capitalism is a fine idea in theory, but in practice it simply doesn't

work. The price mechanism and the law of supply and demand are supposed to guarantee that everything runs smoothly, and yet we end up with nineties and dilettantes running railways, sacking all the drivers and then seeming genuinely befuddled that there's nobody left who knows how to make a train go. We see industrialists who, rather than pay decent wages or negotiate with the elected representatives of their workers, will provoke a strike, and then dismiss hundreds of trained people with years of experience and cobble together a workforce of scabs who have absolutely no idea what they are doing.

But we are asked to believe that such leaders of men should have the right to lecture head teachers about the skills needed by modern industry. How appropriate is it, then, that one of the powers of the new Action Zones will be to scrap the agreed pay and working conditions of teachers. The Conservatives gave employers back the right to treat their own workers like scum. David Blunkett is giving them the right to dictate that public sector workers should be treated like scum.

I am not suggesting that the Government is intending to give rotarians complete control of education. I'm arguing that they should be given no say in it whatsoever. Employers should perhaps place adverts in local papers saying: "We reckon that in about a year's time, our offices will want redecorating and we might need a couple of people who can speak Japanese." Beyond that, businesspeople are far too short-sighted to offer any suggestions about the future.

Their status as local worthies is bound up with the idea that they

## People depend on employers for a living but that does not mean that deference is owed

"create" jobs, although it is never said when they lay people off that they have destroyed jobs. The jobs are simply "lost", as if by accident. It is true that people depend on their employers for a living, but that does not mean that deference is owed. I depend on the brewing industry for recreation but I don't value their opinions.

Since the Government is finally dispensing with the principle that service providers should be democratically accountable, perhaps a percentage of seats on every council should be reserved for the largest employers in the locality. In the interests of fair play a ballot could be held in each work place, with all workers obliged to vote for their managing director.

The business community could be given ex-officio posts at the Department of Education, the curriculum authority and on the governing bodies of schools. Then they could really start to shape what is taught in schools. Kids would learn that the chemical constituents of water are oxygen, hydrogen and acid waste. Biology teachers would redraft the food chain to show that the natural diet of cattle is manure sheep pats. And, in physics, children would be expected to them the Extended Warranty. The Master, whereby everything spontaneously falls apart shortly after the manufacturer's warranty expires.

I HAVE been asked by the sacked Magsy Kitchen to write in the *Daily Telegraph* to thank Guardian readers for contributing more than £7,000 to their Christmas appeal.

**Read the latest European news without using a phrasebook.**

*The Guardian* INTERNATIONAL



**W**INTER IS with us. The wind rattles the windows: the rain rains. Tender tendrils of frost span the yellowing windscreen of my vintage Humber Snipe. In the dulcet fields by the frozen stream, the first sweet snowdrops and "umble acornies" delight the sourness of January.

*Allegro ma non troppo* (Bolton-on-Deane) writes: Last week you wrote of Archbishop Benson that he went on about the way to choose cats or to fold a rochet. What's a rochet?

*Smallweed eruditely retorts:* A close-fitting surplice-like vestment proper to bishops and abbots. Surely everybody knows that.

**A**S I WAS saying: In the dulcet fields by the frozen stream, sweet snowdrops and humble haconites...

*Nobilmente ma pochissimo giocoso (Tring) interrupts by e-mail:* You have still not explained the term heteroscedacity, which you used in your column last month.

*Smallweed severely replies:* You have not been attending. I explained this condition in this column as recently as April, 1993. It's a concept, I quite clearly told you, referring to random patterns of distribution. It is frequently hated about by statistically trained sociologists, psephologists and similar troublemakers, who possibly use it even in marital quarrels.

"What the hell is making you so heteroscedastic today?" they howl at their spouses ("I wrote).

*Plus Lento con Peppermint* (Nuneaton) playfully usings: With all respect, I'm still not quite sure what it means.

*Smallweed jocosely concedes:* Neither am I.

**M**Y LOCUBRATIONS last week (what a gorgeous word: let's hear it more often in '98) on Sicket, the Bensons and others has produced a fat postbag of revelation and anecdote about some of the Peakabids (People Everyone Should Know About But I Don't) whom I listed. The Bensons, I discover, are even more peculiar than I suggested. EW, who went on to become Archbishop of Can-

terbury, first proposed marriage to Minnie, his wife, when the maiden was only 12. It's not clear that the marriage was happy: the honeymoon was said to have been a disaster, and though they produced endless children, none married.

After EW died, Minnie came out as a lesbian. One shudders to think what would have become of the family had the News Of The World as presently edited been around at the time. One source of discord between the Archbishop and Mrs Archbishop was Dame Ethel Smyth, the composer (and another adherent of Sappho). The Archbishop, I'm told, could not stand her, though she admired not just his brains but his looks: "The sight of his majestic form approaching the tea table scattered my wits," she recorded, "as an advancing elephant might scatter a flock of sheep."

I'm sorry I haven't the space for the story about the parrot. As for Walter Sicket, I'm told that a book by Stephen Knight names him as part of a three-man team which made up Jack the Ripper. No Benson, it's thought, was involved.

**N**EW YEAR advice from the people's psychiatrist Raj Persaud: this year, we should learn to say "no". Advice Smallweed suspects Raj may have taken himself when

pestered by the media for his services, since his regular weekly column no longer appears in the *Daily Mail*.

Smallweed's cherished nomination as Mr Ubiquitous in the world of the mind has therefore now passed from Persaud to Professor Cary Cooper of UMIST, who since the start of December alone has treated us to his thoughts on the will to resign (in the context of Malcolm Chisholm, the minister who walked out on Blair), the significance of names chosen for children (the prevalence of Williams and Harrys is seen by the Prof as "a living memorial to Diana"). Secondly, the role of the Christmas card as "social glue", how to deal with teenagers tempted by drugs, and the dangers of presentism, his own invention I think, is the opposite of absenteeism and refers to people who just can't keep out of the office. Sounds as if Cary suffers from something like that.

**S**MAILWEED'S CAMPAIGN for the rustication of over-familiar music was powerfully boosted this week when the wonderful young violinist Tasmin Little took part in a BBC mini-series about the music musicians hate: an odd notion, in that it involved playing works which those taking part hoped

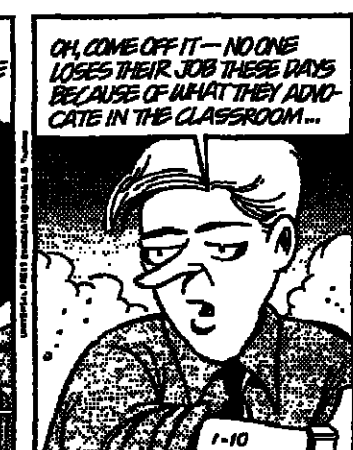
you would hate. Episode one had featured a doleful young man whose hates included Jody Thet and soggy Delmas. The trouble with Tasmin was that in her cheerful, generous way she could find only two works to disparage. But happily one of these was a Smallweed nominee: the Pachelbel canon.

"It's just so incredibly dull!" she chorled as Pachelbel ground away in the background. Her other nomination, unexpectedly, was Handel's Water Music: "Too much F major, and all those perfect cadences!" "That's quite enough of that," she ordained 10 seconds or so into the minuet. Secondly, *Less Water Music* in '98, please: and more Tasmin.

**A**CHAP in the Evening Standard berates William Hague for describing his lovely wife Ffion as "a stunner". He says he fears for the language. I guess he thinks that "stunner" is a word coined by the tabloids. So did I, until Tuesday, when I came across an account of an argument involving Swinburne, the painter Burne-Jones and two others in the mid-1850s about the nature of heaven. Heaven, said Swinburne, was only conceivable as a sexual paradise, "a rose-garden full of stunners". (Swinburne, *The Poet And His World*, by Donald Thomas, pages 45-46, just in case you want to check up on me.)

## Doonesbury Flashbacks

BY GARRY TRUDEAU



## THE WORST OF MY WEEK

**S**AYS NOVELIST FREDERICK FORSYTH: "We waking up last Sunday to realise the raging throat of the previous evening was not bad claret but the dreaded nadders. I was supposed to go to Shropshire for dinner but had to cry off. Also supposed to shoot pheasant on Monday. Swinburne lashed the country. The drive to Salop would have been near impossible and the birds must have been doing 100mph. So I stayed in bed with a Night Nurse. Alas, only the liquid kind."

مكتبة الامير



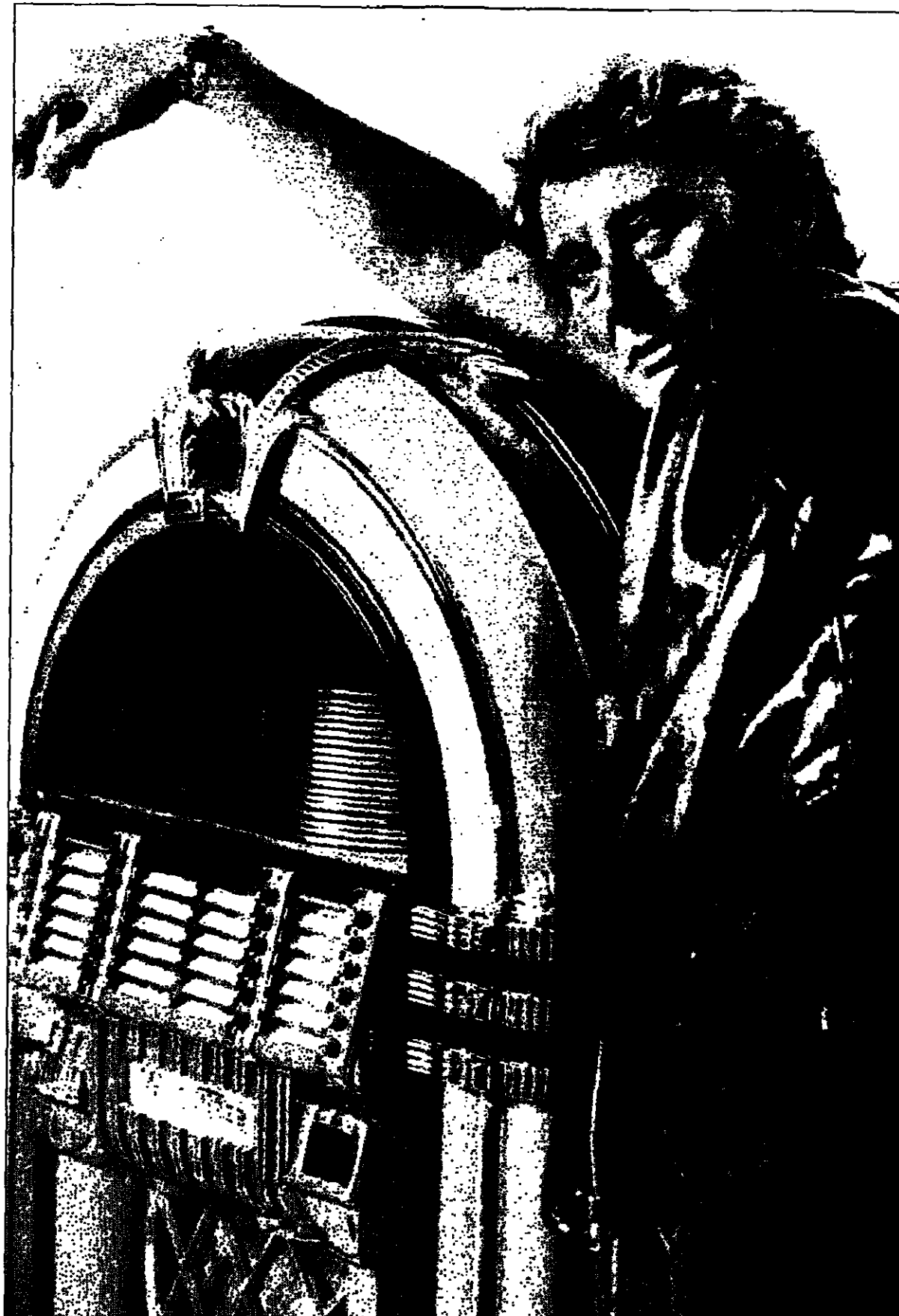


# Sacre bleu! French pop is, how you say, not bad

**Robert Yates** explains why an enduring musical joke is no longer funny



French bread and butter... the Gallic rock 'n' roll hero Johnny Hallyday (right); Vanessa Paradis (far left) a one-hit wonder here with Joe Le Taux; and behind the masks, (left) Daft Punk the new hot hope  
Photograph of Vanessa Paradis: S. JUMNER



It's touching to witness. Fully grown-up French people are all of a flutter because we — yes, the ill-formed British whose opinion they normally affect to disdain — have finally given them a much coveted seal of approval. French pop, it appears, is now okay. To be precise, a bunch of French dance acts — Air, Daft Punk, Dimitri From Paris — have been pronounced fashionable by fashionable London. But it's a start.

Our confrères at Liberation, the liberal French daily, are so excited that next week they're sending over a journalist to get the low-down. It gets even better when reporter Laurent Rigoulet explains the interest: "Well, we like to think we're good in literature, good in cinema, but, er, we've had this complex about our pop music..."

Have they ever. And what has made it worse is that they always tried so hard. Rock, especially the French take seriously, as if by studying it they might understand the secret formula. The French rock magazine, *Les Inrockuptibles*, is a joke-free publication in which the musicians' pearls of wisdom are gently collected and carefully burnished. Still, it makes for amusing reading to have the musings of some indie kid from Burnley translated into *philosophie*, though "we just want to have a few drinks and a laugh" reads not much better in French.

As for the French bands themselves, they tend not to receive much respect from their countrymen. "You could always recognise a French rock band," says Lydia Barbarian, a Parisian who broadcasts for French radio from London, "dyed black hair, wasted look". Hence it's no surprise that the above names on the "approved" list are all dance acts. French rock is still to be redeemed.

If you are French and want to be in a rock band, the first rule has long been to work on the Keith Richards look, an older Richards version preferred. "They're still in love with that rock romance thing that the British now laugh at," says Barbarian. "Things never really progressed beyond the garage years, all Velvet Underground, and taking heroin, or at least looking as if you had."

"It's a love that never dies to judge from the pronouncements this week of 54-year-old Johnny Hallyday — the cod Anglo name a rebel yell in itself — who told *Le Monde* that his "dream is to die violently without realising it, like James Dean." Hallyday is the patron saint of those provincial bars where the pinball machine is the main feature and there's always a twentysomething in a blouson, rehearsing his Elvis routine.

For most French teenagers, contemporary American, and especially British pop have long

held sway, all cherished with a rare reverence. When I taught at Montpellier lycée in the late eighties, the very bright pupils who had just prepared a paper on the War Poets or DH Lawrence, would earnestly ask if we could go over the lyrics of a Simple Minds or Cure song. It was enough to turn you into FR Leavis, warning the kids that the singers' diction was disgraceful and syntax in popular music was not to be trusted.

**B**ut part of our seriousness about rock has always been wanting some proper content," says Barbarian. "All of your English irony, or nonsense or bubblegum, the French never really went for that. The lyrics had to say something. I find it difficult to imagine the idea of a French Spice Girls."

A French Spice Girls would all be Posh, all vying with each other for the perfect moue. However, there was, you may remember, a teenybop French import in the late eighties, in the tiny shape of Vanessa Paradis whose British success heralded nothing more culturally significant than the abiding marketability of a cute Lolita.

The odd thing about this French liking for serious, po-faced rockers is that the chanson, their own traditional popular song, happily accommodates irony wit

and irreverence. (The lycée pupils seemed to find the genre talented, partly because of the government regulations which insisted that radio transmissions had to carry a certain native quota. The regulations worked, of course, to turn them off the chanson, much as cracking down on English language "imports" had them shouting "cool weekend" as if it were a mantra.) But as soon as the earnest young men strapped on their electric guitars, it was cue struggle and pain.

"French rock bands never managed to be that young, anyway," says Isabelle Traclet, a native of Marseille who now works in London for dance record label, Deconstruction. "And to explain that, you would have to look at the wider culture. We don't necessarily have all this youth culture business that you lot automatically grow up with, where young kids meet up, go somewhere dirty, take drugs." (Is this it? Our bright new youthful image?) "And then music tends to come out of this."

Jack Lang, one-time minister of culture, tried to encourage rock roots. "But all he did," says Traclet, "was encourage people to bang drums in the middle of estates. Nothing original came out of it." There were — and remain — fewer outlets for the would-be rock trainee in France. Live music is prohibitively expensive, while clubs tend to be for an older set. "But how we suffered, not

having that culture," quips Traclet. "We had to go on our *motocycles* [motorised bikes] to the beach instead! Which always struck me as the most sensible attitude the French could take to this Anglo-American virus — rise above it, resist trying to play a game they couldn't win."

Asked by a visiting, mischief-making English pal whether she could show him some French popular culture, an old girlfriend of mine reached for her bookcase and pulled down a copy of Proust. Still, they persisted. So, what's changed? What has possessed the normally sober magazine of the French Institute, *Tandem*, to declare "All is not lost for the young artists of France. Just as English football has been able to welcome French players and turn them into local stars, the international club scene knows how to forget its prejudices." The entente cordiale has come about, as *Tandem* suggests, on the dance floor. Air, the Parisian duo of the moment, trade in kitsch disco with decent melodies. Like compatriots Dimitri and Daft Punk, they have no rock baggage. Lyrics are not much of an issue, and laid back wit is the currency instead of angst. It's music that travels easily, with no bulky instruments to clutter up the Euroroad.

"There is no scene in France," says Liberation's Laurent Rigoulet. "It's only the British interest that has brought all these

## Who's who dans le rock Français

### In Air

The sound of Bright New France, or one that makes dance music for people who don't really want to dance. Parisian duo who used to be dirty indie rockers but now make innovative, electronic music or high-grade easy listening, depending on your prejudices.

### Daft Punk

Not punk, but semi-daft, the duo makes bold dance music. Since last year's success, were useful in softening the British up for the French invasion. Present gratitude could turn...

### Out

#### Johnny Hallyday

Sees himself in great rock outlaw tradition, but is more Liberace than Little Richard. His chief purpose now is to remind cocky countrymen high on their new modishness just how fallible they really are.

#### Jean Michel Jarre

Author of terribly portentous slabs of synthesiser, often accompanied by a vast bank of lights, producing a sort of son et lumière show out of Blackpool. Somehow persuaded Charlotte Rampling to marry him.

groups together." Much of the French stuff making waves in Britain sells better in the UK than at home. The irony is that the most successful French pop in terms of the native market hardly exports at all.

This is French rap, a genuine phenomenon according to Rigoulet, managing to be both "cutting-edge" and "top 10". (The rapper MC Solaar has had some joy in the Britain in the last few years, but he hardly set a precedent.) Rap is the sound of the

cités, the council estates on the edge of France's big towns, scenes of recent riots.

The music has been boosted by the high-profile international success of La Haine, the recent Mathieu Kassovitz film, which portrayed life on a *cité*. "France now has the biggest rap market after America," says Rigoulet. "For once we have our own good French pop. And you British are not hearing most of it." Ah, normal service resumed — so much for the rapprochement.

**John Cunningham** launches a new game — spot the modern icons hanging in art galleries

## Hanging out with spitting images

If you only pop into an art gallery a) to get 10 minutes' refuge from the sales; b) you've heard they're great places for sexual encounters; or c) the loos are safe for smoking spiffs, then a new game has started which could be your sort of thing. It should be called Spitting Image, but that title's already been nicked. So spot the Likeness will do just as well. Actually, it's a very old game. The Greeks or Romans probably invented it; medieval churchgoers played it as they gawped up at the frescoes; and it was played by anyone who gazed at formal portraits from the 17th century onwards.

Anyway, Spot the Likeness has just started a new round, for no reason other than that

the diarist in the London Evening Standard noticed that the main figure in a Joseph Wright painting of 1768 in the National Gallery — a figure with a lined and furrowed face, pupils dilated and long dishevelled hair — looks astonishingly like Peter Stringfellow, the swing-fellow of London clubland.

This set off a search for other famous lookalikes in the capital's galleries — and beyond. The most striking instance we've found is a portrait of Lady Agnew of Lochnaw, you'd swear it was Eleanor Bron playing an heiress in a Victorian melodrama — except that the portrait of the dark-eyed beauty is of a real (but now forgotten) Scottish worthy by John Singer



Life imitating art (clockwise from left) — Eleanor Bron and Lady Agnew of Lochnaw; Peter Stringfellow and Joseph Wright's Experiment On A Bird In The Air Pump, in the National Gallery; Millais's version of Joseph the Carpenter and Bobby Charlton



Sargent. It's in the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Three possible candidates were cited in the Tate. The best contender was Millais's Christ in the Home Of His Parents: the figure of Joseph the carpenter could pass for Bobby Charlton. You'd have to screw your eyes to see model Kate Moss as the virgin in Burne Jones's King Cophetia And The Maid. And in spite of the enthusiasm of one gallery-goer who sees the countenance of

Nigel Hawthorne in a self-portrait by Joanna Reynolds, we weren't convinced.

We thought the National Gallery might win the Lookalike Venue of the Year (the new cultural award that awaits only a sponsor before it's launched). As well as the Joseph Wright, there's a Bronzino of a cupid kissing Venus. This spirited display of heterosexuality (leaving aside the question of an under-age cupid) has not

stopped some visitors remarking that the golden locks and rosy cheeks of the cupid could belong to Chris Smith in his younger years. This is an appropriate reference culturally to the Heritage Secretary though perhaps not sexually, as Chris is open about his preference for male rather than female anatomy. So the great National Gallery scores only one — the same as that much smaller treasure-trove of paintings in the West End, the Wallace Collection. There you can see



the rubicund figure of a drunk: "Oliver Reed" many have gasped. In fact, it's a 17th century Dutch work by Ferdinand Bol.

"It's a big joke here. He's called the Toper," says Jo Hedley, the gallery's curator of pre-1800 pictures. "He's hunching out with a glass in his hand." At the Wallace, they at least have a sense of humour — at one larger national institution we were huffily told, in our Lookalike quest, "the curators don't get involved in that sort of thing".



While she draws no conclusions about likenesses travelling across generations, JoHedley does say that it's not uncommon for an art expert to remark on seeing someone with an 18th- or a 17th-century face.

As for what the phenomenon means for G-string man Stringfellow and that old reprobate Reed, surely being able to claim as classy ancestors handsome portraits hanging in public galleries is a snobby bonus for the nooze-about-town. Not that Pete and Ollie ever would.



## arts



It took vision and 200 tonnes of steel to build Britain's biggest sculpture. **Peter Hetherington** talks to the team behind it

# On the side of the Angel

## The Making Of The Angel Of The North

Even before it is erected, Antony Gormley's 200-tonne Angel Of The North has become Britain's best-known piece of public art. But is the object that will go up next month a sculpture or an amazing feat of engineering? Five stores high and with a wingspan as big as a jumbo jet's (52 metres or 169 feet), it will stand on a mound by the site of a colliery beside the A1 on the southern approaches to Gateshead. It will be seen by over 90,000 drivers a day, as well as passengers on the main east coast railway line.

The project has provoked both ringing praise and withering criticism. Gormley has been stung by remarks about "fascist" art, arguing that the whole idea of the monument has been tarnished by totalitarian regimes. As a result, at one stage he says he suffered a slight crisis of confidence. But the Angel has now captured the imagination of the north-east. Gateshead Borough Council, which has nurtured the project since the early nineties and put together the £200,000 of Lottery, European and private money that paid for it, claims it will be the most dramatic piece of engineering in the north since the building of the Tyne Bridge in the twenties.

Antony Gormley: I was first contacted at the end of 1994 by Gateshead Council. They talked about a competition for a landmark sculpture, but I did not pay any attention to it. I was rather busy at the time, and when someone from Gateshead rang me up and said, "Look, we would like you to take this seriously," my reply was, "I don't do public art." Sid Henderson: We have only one gallery in Gateshead, and it's very small, so the idea was, why not go to the public with art? The problem is, if you go down any high street, from Arundel to Alnwick, public art is all the same. There's no individuality. There's got to be some sort of statement, or opportunity for individuality to express itself. There used to be a colliery on the site, and we said that would be an ideal place for a sculpture, a landmark. Everybody agreed.

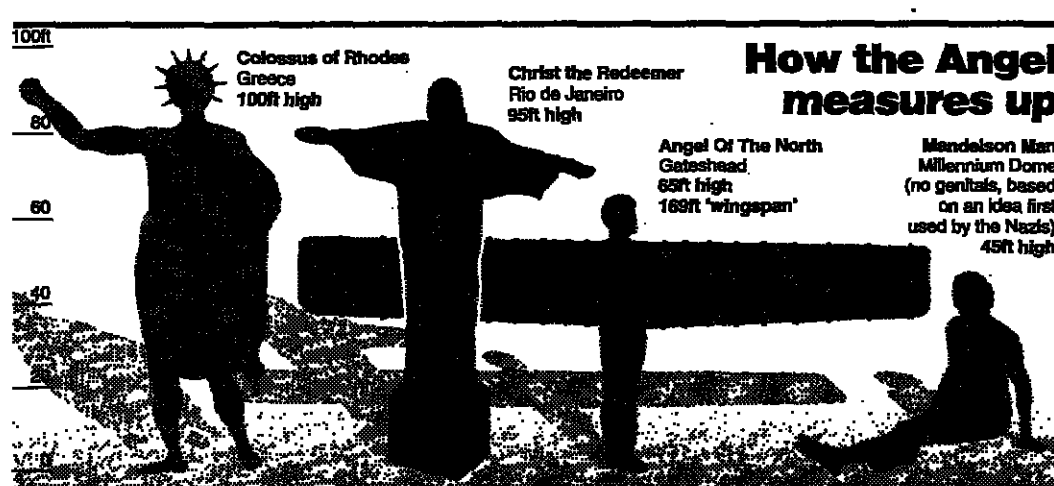
We spent hours looking at contemporary artists and their work. We saw this image of the angel that had been exhibited by Antony — at Malmö. I think — and we decided to

go for him. He came to the site, a mound, and said, "This is very inspiring." He could envisage the feet going into the roots of the earth and the Angel reaching to the sky with aspirations for the future. What could be better? The size was... well, difficult to comprehend. Antony Gormley: They were very persuasive. They sent me some material and I was immediately intrigued. What is marvellous about the site is that it is very much a working landscape, with the motorway and everything. There's a mound on the site of an old colliery, and this was already saying that something went on underground. Men worked under there for 200 years, and out of that came the coal that gave rise to the history of the north-east, and that should not be lost. Sid really does have a vision. He believes that human diversity is as much in danger as biological diversity that McDonald's culture is providing more and more of less and less. He sees the Angel as being a resistance to that.

Bill Stalley: A chap from Gateshead came to us with a model of the Angel in a big wooden crate in a box van. They just took the front panel off the crate outside and we all trooped into the back of the van and had a look. What did I think? You want an honest answer? I didn't have an opinion apart from the fact that this was a contract — work. Neil Carstairs: Antony Gormley had a clear idea of what he wanted above the ground, but it soon became clear that the foundations had to be larger than any of us envisaged if the wings were to take substantial wind forces. The idea was to take Antony Gormley's model and enlarge it without changing the dimensions in any way — and that could have meant it being fatter at the bottom — and we found it was just possible to keep to his plan.

One hundred and fifty tonnes of concrete have been poured into piles, which will root the structure into solid rock 20 metres below the surface and enable it to withstand winds of more than 100mph. A concrete slab 1.5 metres thick has been laid on top, topped by a 3.3-metre plinth on which the angel will stand, secured by 52 three-metre bolts. I think it will look very impressive.

Bill Stalley: We have dealt with Neil Carstairs's firm [Ove Arup] successfully in the past, and a company of that standing wasn't going to get involved in a white elephant. Instead of the Angel being completely manufactured in steel, they were looking to cast the body up to



## Cast of characters



about chest level. The wings, the top, and the head were still to be fabricated.

We were well aware of the £200,000 budget the council had. We looked around for one or two firms that could make castings, but they were just so far off the budget that we thought it would never go ahead. A few days before the tenders were due in, we sat down and came up with the idea that we could fabricate the central core, to which we could then attach the ribs and an outer skin. We did a quick estimate and got it down to somewhere near the budget.

Sid Henderson: We saw it as an opportunity for engineering, using traditional skills, and were determined to keep the work in the area to provide jobs. It's provided work for 20 men in Hartlepool. One of them said to me: "It's nice — we're going to be able to show our children what we actually do." It's a huge feat of engineering. Bill Stalley: The raw material, the plate, is weathering-grade steel with a small amount of copper content, which forms a protective coating. Antony had various models based on a cast of his own body, which was used as the final shape, and we sent it to the geometrics department at Newcastle University. They did a scan for the shape, and that information was fed into computerised machines, which cut the shapes we needed. The ribs were then attached to the outer core and then we started to form the skin.

The wings were simple and straightforward. We finished them in October. Once the body is completed in the workshop, we will bring it outside and line it up to the wings. Then the whole thing will be transported to Gateshead in three sections — two wings and a body. It could take a week or 10 days to erect. The biggest problem is wind. We've got to get the body lined up, then lift up the wings and put them into place by bolting and welding. Antony Gormley: It is important to me that the Angel is rooted in the ground — the complete antithesis of what an angel is, floating about in the ether. It has an air of mystery. You make things because they cannot be said.

I hope it is never a symbol in the way a trophy is. It is about asking questions about this transformation between the industrial and the information age, about whether art can be a focus for people's hopes and fears. We now have what used to be an angelic faculty — the Wright brothers' flight in 1904 in some way set the tone for the century — and the Angel is reminding us that we have enormous potential, but it comes with enormous danger. So it

Welcome to another world... above, how the Angel Of The North will look next month

celebrates and acts as a warning at the same time. It generates as much fear as excitement. Bill Stalley: It will look absolutely perfect. For our company, there's a lot of pride in this. As the job developed, people started to say: "Oh, this is going to be the biggest sculpture in the UK," and you start to think, "Hey, we're on to something here. What we've made will be in the public eye for generations, and we're the people who've made it." Really it is not a sculpture: we've reproduced what was on a drawing. I'd never heard of Antony Gormley, although I don't class myself as a follower of art. But he's a good bloke, one of the guys, and likes a good chinwag with the men.

Antony Gormley: I think the project has got to Bill a bit. You can tell by his body language. I am only a very small part of this, and it should be very much seen as a collective effort. Even if you don't like it, the engineering is extraordinary — like building the Forth Bridge without the banks on either side. Art in the 20th century has been characterised by the individual's pursuit of his own freedom. The point about this work is that it has been built by a lot of people for a lot of people.

James Buxton: It is a very powerful image. People talk about images when they talk about paintings, but not when they talk about sculptures — and this has become the best-known sculpture in the country before it has even been erected. I do not see it as provocative, but here is a sculpture that has provoked reaction — it has stuck in the imagination. Gateshead Council has stood by this through thick and thin. They recognise that art can be used as a means to reposition a town.

Eddie Smith: I think it's great. It will do for Gateshead what the Tyne Bridge did for Newcastle. It's got people talking. People say: "Did you buy the pub because of the Angel?" but we honestly didn't. Maureen Adamson: It's awful. I'm more traditional. I prefer ordinary things. But I could be in the minority. I'll never like it, but it is something we have to accept. Eddie Smith: Oh, Maureen, you've got to move with the times. Antony Gormley: I'm not looking for uncritical adulation. I do not think Mount Rushmore is any good or that the Statue of Liberty is a particularly good piece of sculpture. This might not be any good, but I am optimistic. It is an experiment...



## Racing

# Sharpical geared up to drop blinkered approach

Nicky Henderson is looking for a classy show in big race. **Chris Hawkins reports**

IT IS five years since Nicky Henderson moved up the road from Lambourn to Seven Barrows when Peter Walwyn vacated the famous stables set amid the splendours of the wild, old open spaces of the Berkshire Downs.

Over 400 acres of land, steeped in history and mythology, go with the place and as Henderson stands high up on the gallops surveying the scene he still cannot get over the grandeur of it all.

"Even with 102 things to think and worry about (normal for a racehorse trainer) you can't fail to notice the hollows, the hills and the sky it's marvellous, a tonic every day," says the man, awaiting a working group of horses, but quickly emerging from his reverie to bark orders about steady the pace of the gallop.

Henderson has plenty on his mind all right. He is like

the mayor of Seven Barrows, a community on its own in the middle of nowhere. There are seven houses and two hotels. A staff of 45, including two grooms, men, and always someone with a question.

He rode 75 winners as an amateur when assistant to Fred Winter, has been training jumpers for 20 years, and to say he has made a pretty good job of it would be something of an understatement.

He has twice been champion trainer and has had a string of top-class performers, notably the triple champion hurdler See You Then, whose fragile legs were the stuff of nightmares, and chasers Remittance Man, Zongalero and The Threavich.

At the moment, he has a hurdler called Sharpical, who works as brilliantly as any horse he has had, but has yet to reproduce this scintillating home form on the race track. Henderson hopes that in The

Ladbroke Hurdle at Leopardstown this afternoon the gelding will finally get it right, equipped for the first time with blinkers.

"Sharpical takes some knowing," explained Henderson. "I can tell you that if anything gets near him at home, then you get down to the beating shop quick. He's the most brilliant horse on the gallops, loves to be in front, but in the race he needs to be held up."

"I got him off Sir Mark Prescott, who trained him on the Flat, and he told me to work him in front, ride from behind. The instruction to the jockey must be to get there at the last and then count to 10. When Mark saw him get beaten by Midnight Legend at Aintree he said the reason was Mick Fitzgerald only counted to eight."

"Mind you, Sharpical was rated about 40lb behind Midnight Legend on the Flat and was only beaten two lengths at levels, so hurdles must have improved him a bit. He's a very good, quick jumper, but doesn't like the firm — that's why he got beaten at

Haydock after Aintree. During the summer he had a serious holiday — he'd had 14 races on the Flat and went straight in jumping so he was entitled to a good break."

"He went to the Kingwood Stud for the summer and came back physically very different, so a tough summer. As Ascot, on his one run so far, he finished second to Mr Markham. The field got very spread out that day and there were only five runners and there was no cover for him."

"He loves to travel in a big field. He's like one of those Minis in the film the Italian Job — you can switch him around all over the place and he loves it."

"He's come on for the Ascot run and has done everything right since then, but I can't help going back to that Aintree race and think blinkers will help him. If he handles the heavy ground at Leopardstown, and I think he will as he's worked so well on the soft, he'll travel well on the bridle."

"I think he'll be able to stay with the all right, but when he gets to the run-in it could become a struggle and that's where I think the blinkers will help him."

Corry Brown, Sharpical's wizen, work-rider, is not quite so loquacious and puts it more succinctly: "He's in great form. If he's third at the last he wins."

As can be gathered, Henderson has a tremendous enthusiasm. There is an aura of positive vitality about him and the speed with which he moves about the yard, supervising and organising, makes it hard to keep up.

If anything can beat Sharpical at home, I know who my money would be on.



Leading contenders... Nicky Henderson and Sharpical can return from Ireland with the spoils. PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

## Celtic Abbey can strike it rich for Williams

Ron Cox

VENETIA WILLIAMS, whose stable has come from strength to strength since she was named a trainer's licence in the autumn of 1995, can secure her biggest prize so far with Celtic Abbey in the Mildmay, Cazale Memorial Chase at Sandown today, written for her by Celtic Abbey won the Horse And Hound Cup at

Stratford last season on only his third start since joining the Williams stable. On the first of them, he was going well when unseating his rider at The Chair in the Grand National.

After finishing fourth behind Banjo at Cheltenham in November, Celtic Abbey had to miss the Hennessy owing to a setback. But with the Williams horses in cracking form now, he should be in good shape for today's assignment.

His trainer is confident Celtic Abbey (3.10) will cope with soft ground and he looks good each-way value at Coral's 16-1.

Grey Sol (2.35) faces some 47, a tremendous enthusiasm. There is an aura of positive vitality about him and the speed with which he moves about the yard, supervising and organising, makes it hard to keep up.

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## Sandown Jackpot card

RON COX	TOP FORM
12.30 Lord Jim City Hall	Lord Jim City Hall
1.30 Cadenhead Cadenhead	Cadenhead Cadenhead
2.05 Cadenhead Cadenhead	Cadenhead Cadenhead
2.30 Cadenhead Cadenhead	Cadenhead Cadenhead
3.10 Cadenhead Cadenhead	Cadenhead Cadenhead

Testing, right-handed circuit of 1m51 with 220yds uphill run-in. The three Railway Forces in the back straight place a premium on accurate jumping.

Gallopers: Hardies, Sol, Dore, Good to go, 4. Dore, Hardies. Top form noted. Long distance travellers: Monrovia (1.30) and Bold Gold (2.40) J. Adam, Borders, 374 miles.

Seven day winners: None.

Unbeaten first time: 1.00 Mile Order, 1.30 Falmouth Bay, 3.10 What A Hand, Sister Stephanie, Viscount's Rose.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F, Flat.

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2.05 Cadenhead Cadenhead	Cadenhead Cadenhead
2.30 Cadenhead Cadenhead	Cadenhead Cadenhead
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## Lingfield (A.W.)

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RON COX	TOP FORM
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## Leopardstown

RON COX	TOP FORM
1.15 Fitzpatrick Hotel Group Novice Chase	Fitzpatrick Hotel Group Novice Chase
1.45 Fitzpatrick Hotel Group Novice Chase	Fitzpatrick Hotel Group Novice Chase
2.15 Fitzpatrick Hotel Group Novice Chase	Fitzpatrick Hotel Group Novice Chase
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**TheGuardian**  **INTERACTIVE**







## Drugs and Sport

## Ruling body rules out Chinese ban

Christopher Zinn  
in Sydney

**S**WIMMING's world governing body made moves last night to deal with the biggest drugs scandal in the sport's history. But Fina said it saw no reason why the entire Chinese squad should be sent home from the world championships in Perth.

Fina broke its silence as the Australian Customs Service considered charging one of the Chinese for trying to smuggle in a prohibited growth hormone. Tests have confirmed that 13 vials found in the bag of the 21-year-old breaststroke swimmer Yuan Yuan at Sydney airport were human growth hormone and not, as the Chinese had claimed, a herbal remedy.

Gunnar Werner, the Fina secretary, said: "We consider this a most serious offence. The doping panel will have to investigate." Fina has been criticised for a softly-softly approach to the issue of drugs in the sport and Australia's head coach Don Talbot accused it yesterday of "leading from the back".

But Werner said the body would be invoking a rule allowing it to treat trafficking of banned drugs as a doping offence which carries a minimum suspension of four years.

"It is evident that the coach Zhou Zhewen and the swimmer Yuan Yuan, both of China, have violated the rules and regulations of Australia in bringing a banned substance into Australia," Werner added. "This crime shall be regarded as a violation of Fina regulation concerning trafficking."

Werner, a Swedish lawyer, said their national team made up of three of the six lawyers on the Fina doping control committee.

The panel would be operational by today and would be given powers to widen the investigation if necessary.

Werner said the Chinese federation would also have the right to an appeal, if required, through the International Olympic Committee's Court of Arbitration in Sport in Switzerland.

"The (Fina) bureau has not considered taking any action against the total team," Werner said. "We have not seen any reason to do that. It's up to them to decide what to do now."

Earlier, the Customs Minister Warren Truss said the China team had been told of the results and although Yuan Yuan and her coach were going home charges could still follow.

"As far as the breach of the law is concerned there are penalties which can be imposed by the courts. In small quantities in cases in the past there haven't always been prosecutions undertaken."

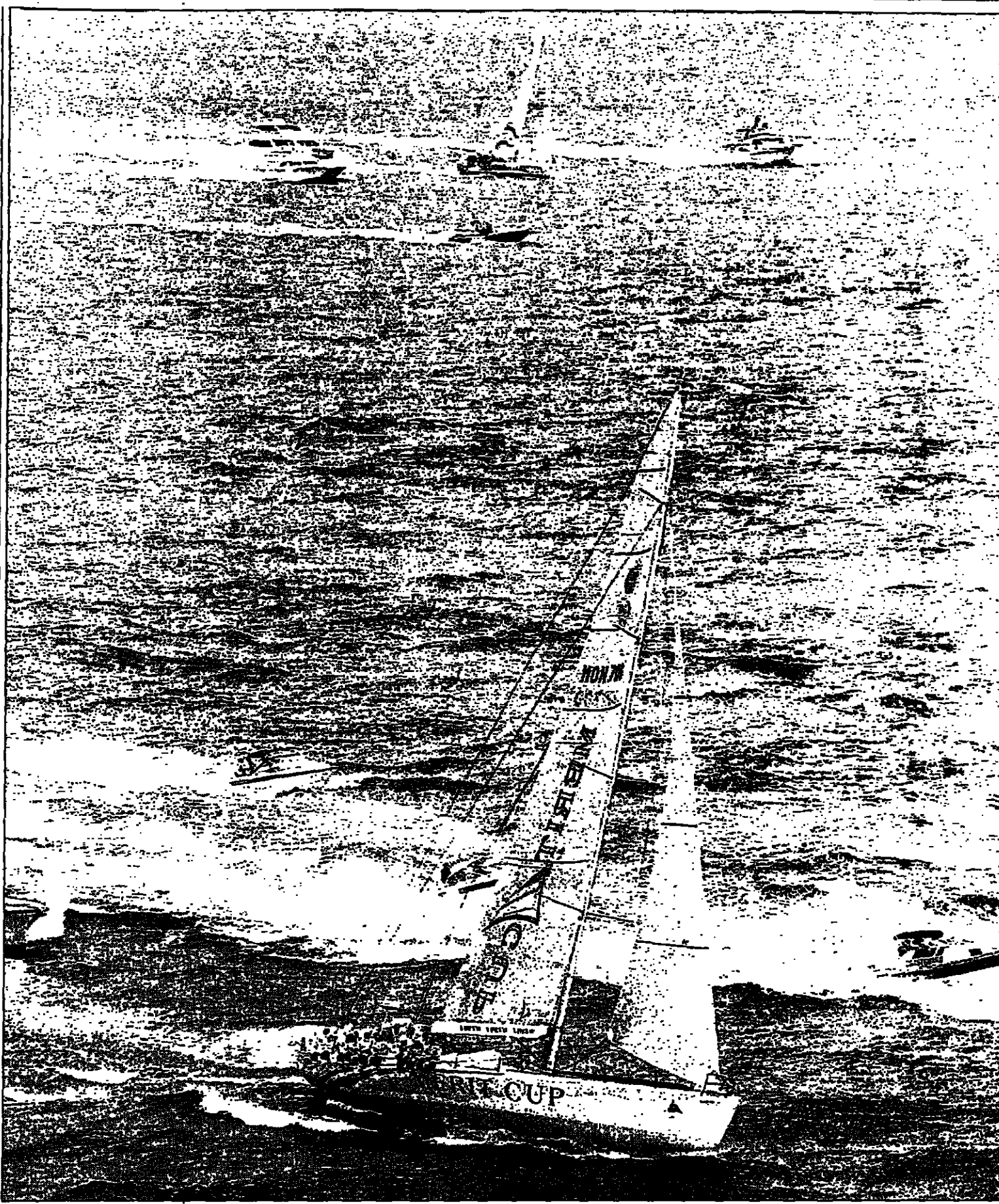
While the Chinese team trained under police guard, the head of the World Swimming Coaches' Association Peter Daland said he doubted they would stay to compete in the rest of the games. "There's a very strong possibility of withdrawal," he said.

And the veteran coach Forbes Carlile, a member of the association, added: "I don't see how they can be allowed to stay. If they swim I'd be surprised."

"When you're caught with that amount of drugs on your person and you're part of a team, the whole team is implicated. They should be put on a plane and sent home."

Australian Government scientists carried out two separate tests, which were then checked at a hospital. The first test found a positive result for HGH, which is a prohibited import under Customs regulations.

Some Chinese travelling with their national team had alleged the swimmers had been framed. The Chinese embassy in Canberra said the Chinese Swimming Association had decided to send Yuan Yuan home where she could face some sort of penalty.



Close-hauled... Merit Cup beats Toshiba in a magnificent finish to the fourth leg of the Whitbread Race from Sydney to Auckland

STEPHEN MUNDAY

## Sailing

## Silk Cut limps in despite slashed mainsail

Bob Fisher in Auckland

**S**ILK CUT's navigator Steve Hayles revealed last night how the British boat survived potentially crippling damage near the end of the fourth leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race, won by Grant Dalton's Merit Cup from Dennis Conner's Toshiba yesterday.

Silk Cut came in sixth, but only after suffering sail damage an hour before crossing the line.

"Just over an hour from Auckland a tack fitting on the jib blew out in over 30 knots of breeze in a very bumpy sea," Hayles said. "And as the sail blew back it smashed into the mainsail, punching a hole the size of a football through the middle. The sail damage summed up what was a very disappointing leg for us."

Despite this setback Innovation Kvaerner, which was trailing Silk Cut, was unable to take advantage.

"The sail damage was unfortunate but it didn't affect the result," said Hayles. "All eyes were on the horizon but as we were less than 10 miles from the finish and 10 miles ahead of Kvaerner there was never a danger of their catching us."

Silk Cut is now lying in seventh position overall, 114 points behind the leading yacht EF Language, but her skipper Lawrie Smith refused to be downhearted. "The Whitbread is a nine-leg event," said Smith. "We've only completed four legs and there are still plenty of points on the table. Sure, the last two weeks have made things difficult for us, but not impossible."

Smith and his crew plan to take a few days off before preparing for the fifth leg from Auckland to Sao Sebastiao in Brazil, which begins on February 1.

## Tennis

## Rusedski on the fast track

Richard Jago in Doha

**D**ISORIENTING was the word for yesterday. European winter weather swept Arabia causing sweaters to be worn under the traditional Qatari dish-dash, and alien ideas about rescheduling action for the daylight hours during the holy month of Ramadan were discussed.

Rain and chill more associated with the old Ayresome Park in February disrupted the fifth night at the shimmering Qatar Open, while the Australian hardcourt championships in Adelaide simultaneously sweated in a 45C desert-like day.

Stranger still was a suggestion that Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman might play behind closed doors during daylight to catch up the schedule without distracting good Muslims. Television tries to avoid bedtimes are devalued, the dark hours with activity and traffic buzzes and thickens during the night. A luncheon ziz cannot compensate for such loss of sleep. Watching tennis half-gaga would be another trial.

"If rain comes, I don't have an umbrella," Vilas Gerulaitis once joked, by way of illustrating that he spent much of the money he earned. That should not happen here, the biggest appearance money of his career.

This is the first championship series tournament in which he has been able to negotiate a deal as a top-six player, and a bucketful of dials may be providing some momentum for the relatively modest endorsements Rusedski has so far had compared with Henman. It is also the first mainstream ATP Tour event in which he has been top seed. Rusedski is a star not only in Britain.

This is both pleasing and stressful. The atmosphere attending Rusedski is suddenly different. The local press is suggesting he and Henman are future Grand Slam winners, and it is good to have a man such as Tony Pickard here to help keep the professional blinkers on.

Not so good is to be faced with the prospect of playing singles twice in a day today, with Rusedski facing France's Fabrice Santoro before a likely meeting with one of his most obstructive rivals, Goran Ivanisevic, and Henman facing Petr Korda before further options can be considered.

Both Britons are fitter than they have ever been, and may cope well physically if they win and are not delayed again by more bad weather. But umpires and linesmen may not.

When the session begins today at about 1 pm local time the officials may not have eaten for seven hours. There is a prospect of seeing some struggling to resist a snooze on the line or fighting the desire for the dusk breakfast rush.

The first ATP Tour event to be held during Ramadan has thus been unlucky, though it is far from unattractive. The timing has enforced some unique adaptations to local customs but, shifted to create a trio of events with Sydney and the Australian Open, this million dollar event now heralds the first Grand Slam and starts the Tour.

It could become the first ATP tournament in which Rusedski and Henman face each other in a final. But there will be some curiosities to observe before that happens.

France and the Slovak

## Boxing

## Heavy-duty Jones to challenge Hide

John Rowling

**H**ERBIE HIDE of Norwich, the World Boxing Organisation heavyweight champion, may meet Roy Jones, generally regarded as the world's best fighter, pound for pound, this summer.

Jones, the Floridian who has held world titles at middleweight, super-middleweight and light-heavyweight, is ready to step up to heavyweight and Hide's promoter Frank Warren is travelling to the United States next week to set up the fight.

No world middleweight champion has gone on to take the heavyweight crown since Britain's Bob Fitzsimmons in 1897, but the 29-year-old Jones, fuelled by a huge ego, believes he has run out of

meaningful opposition in the lighter divisions.

Having won the International Boxing Federation middleweight and super-middleweight titles and the World Boxing Council light-heavyweight title he is prepared to provide a make-or-break fight for Hide, 25, whose only professional defeat was a hammering by Riddick Bowe in Las Vegas in 1995.

Hide reclaimed the WBO title in November by beating Tony Tucker and his first defence may be on February 28 against Darroll Wilson, a 31-year-old American who beat Shannon Briggs three years ago.

Jones could be the lucrative opponent to follow, possibly in an open-air double bill with Naseem Hamed against the spectacular Canadian Arturo Gatti at Wembley stadium in July.

## Chess

## Karpov speeds past Anand to remain world champion

Leonard Barden

**A**NATOLY KARPOV has managed to cling on to the Fide world title. The 46-year-old Muscovite, who had missed chances to defeat India's Visy Anand in classical play, won both speed-chess tiebreak games at the Olympic Museum in Lausanne yesterday to retain the championship by a 5-3 margin. Karpov won \$850,000, Anand half that amount.

The Indian No. 1, who is regarded as a speed-chess specialist, will particularly rue his performance in the first game, in which both players had half an hour on their clocks.

Playing confidently as black, he was a pawn up with a strong position until a casual exchange suddenly allowed Karpov an endgame counter with rook, bishop and a pawn which advanced to queen.

Anand, now needing to win as white to stay in the match, cracked completely in the next game, wildly sacrificing

two pawns then a knight for a non-existent attack. Karpov coolly consolidated by simple play before launching his own counter-attack and Anand was forced to resign on move 33.

Now negotiations will resume for a unifying championship match, most likely in Spain, against Garry Kasparov, who holds a break-away version of the title.

Kasparov is the world No. 1 and has spoken disparagingly of a sixth series against Karpov, but he needs the legitimacy that ownership of the undisputed world title would give him.

Karpov, for his part, would welcome a chance to restore some of the credibility he lost in his latest championship defence by controversially being given a bye to the final at Lausanne.

For Anand the future is bleak. The Indian now has the label of a suspect temperament at the highest level because of the manner of his capitulation yesterday and his earlier match defeats by Kasparov and Kamsky.

## Cricket

## Guyana Test in danger

**E**NGLAND's third Test in the West Indies may be switched from Guyana because of political unrest in Georgetown.

The hotel in which the team is due to stay has been hit by one of two small bomb blasts in a wave of anti-government protests. The Foreign Office, describing the political climate as "tense and volatile", is advising against travel.

England are not due in Guyana until February 19, but Lord's officials are monitoring the situation.

The England squad arrived in Jamaica yesterday and went straight to Sabina Park to see Courtney Walsh take three for 15 before lunch against Barbados.

Last Sunday's limited-overs international between England and Kenya has been declared a no result. England were originally awarded the match under the "rain rule" when the game was washed out, but it later transpired that they should not have been. The team will now go

into today's final match in the series in Nairobi only one up.

Somerset have signed the 36-year-old off-spinner Adrian Pierson from Leicestershire and Hampshire's Stuart Millburn, who took 39 wickets in 21 first-class matches for the county, has retired because of his shoulder injury.

In the latest World Series Cup match in Brisbane, South Africa beat New Zealand by two runs in a thrilling last-ball finish. South Africa piled up 300 for six in their 50 overs, with Gary Kirsten hitting 103 from 115 balls, but New Zealand recovered superbly from 124 for six and were denied victory only by a brilliant Lance Klusener catch off the last ball. Allan Donald, who collapsed from exhaustion during the match, recovered to take four for 43.

Zimbabwe tumbled towards a crushing defeat by Sri Lanka in the first Test in Asgiriya. Replying to a home total of 459 they were skittled out for 140 with the off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan

taking five for 23 in 29 overs. Muralitharan added a sixth wicket as Zimbabwe, following on, reached 71 for two in their second innings.

**NEW ZEALAND:** First innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Second innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Third innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Fourth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Fifth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Sixth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Seventh innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Eighth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Ninth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Tenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Eleventh innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Twelfth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Thirteenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Fourteenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Fifteenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Sixteenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Seventeenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Eighteenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Nineteenth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

**NEW ZEALAND:** Twentieth innings (overnight 46-2)

G. R. Brown 46, S. D. Mitchell 22, A. D. Silva 75

## Super Bowl

## San Francisco showdown is much more than friendly rivalry

Mike Carlson

**I**F THIS were racing, the Jockey Club would investigate for collusion. The Green Bay Packers coach Mike Holmgren relaxes in the off-season with the San Francisco 49ers quarterback Steve Young, but tomorrow Young will be dodging Holmgren's blitting defenders.

The Packers quarterback Brett Favre calls Steve Mariucci "Moochie" and used to watch his mentor's kids, yet will be out to spoil Mariucci's first season as the Niners' head coach. At stake is the National Football Conference championship and a berth in Super Bowl XXXII, and in San Francisco this weekend all friendships are off.

Young was once discarded by Tampa Bay for a lack of discipline, joining the 49ers as back-up to Joe Montana. He was tutored in their coach Bill Walsh's "West Coast" offence by Holmgren, whose legacy to the 49ers was Young's 1995 Super Bowl victory.

Favre, the National Football League's only three-time Most Valuable Player, was similarly discarded by Atlanta. Holmgren, having taken charge of the Packers, signed him and hired Mariucci from the University of California as his tutor. History repeated itself with last year's Super Bowl win.

Despite both coaches' groundings in disciplined offence, their defences are so strong that the game may hinge on which quarterback can better improvise when set plays break down. Young, 36 and one concussion away from retirement, trails Favre in this respect.

Another former assistant of Walsh's, Mike Shanahan, leads Denver in tomorrow's earlier American Football Conference championship game at Pittsburgh.

The Broncos have played in five AFC decisions and the Steelers nine, but they have never met at this stage. Denver's solitary visit to Three Rivers Stadium in the Nineties came on December 7, when they lost 35-24.

Shoreham's Scott Welch will fight Axel Schulz of Germany for the vacant European heavyweight title in Berlin on December 28, which begins on February 28.

**Boxing**

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## Football

Michael Walker on the Liverpool goalkeeper who fears he could lose his place between the posts to the American Brad Friedel

## James desperate to save his shirt



On the way out? ... David James has not missed a game for four years

CLIVE BRUNSON

IT IS a moment David James and every goalkeeper visiting St James' Park must dread, that first goal-kick in front of the seething Gallowgate End. Sure enough, as soon as it arrived on Wednesday night James turned to face a choir of thousands wallowing in their signature chant: "Dodge Keep-ah, Dodge Keep-ah".

James may not have found much consolation in the thought that every opposition keeper receives the same treatment but he could take comfort from the news that it was not difficult for the neutral to feel sympathy for Liverpool's much condemned No. 1.

After all, for the second time in 10 days at Newcastle James had performed with apparently nerve-free competence and yet despite such elegant professionalism, and one in football is aware he is a man experiencing the meaning of job insecurity.

Whether or not James is proved correct today he fears he could lose his job altogether after a meeting with the Liverpool manager Roy Evans about the situation. The player ready to usurp him is Brad Friedel, the American recently arrived at Anfield whose work permit requires him to play in 18 matches — 75 per cent of Liverpool games — from December 22, the date of his registration.

With 18 Premiership matches now left, plus a two-legged Coca-Cola Cup semi-final against Middlesbrough, and the possibility of another match — the final — Evans finds himself with only three games in which to manoeuvre. And given the acrimony preceding the Department for Education and Employment's granting of the permit it seems likely it would cancel Friedel's licence swiftly. Then Liverpool would lose not only a goalkeeper but also the £1 million paid to the United States Soccer Federation for him.

Behind the scenes at Anfield there is bewilderment and annoyance that Evans has let the situation get to this stage. It is pointed out that just across Stanley Park Everton had a similar predicament when Howard Kendall,

having bought Thomas Myhre from Viking Stavanger, had to drop a legend, Neville Southall, but did so ruthlessly. Southall is now with Southend United.

Evans, in contrast, is accused of sentiment and of bowing to the opinion of senior Liverpool players such as Paul Ince. After the disastrous home defeat by Coventry City last Saturday in the FA Cup, the captain's first statement concerned his keeper. "I just want to make a point," he said, "that David James should not be dropped from the Coca-Cola Cup quarter-finals."

James, not blamed for any of Coventry's three goals, duly retained his place but privately is said to fear the axe today. The theory is that while Evans did not want to risk Friedel in such a hostile environment as St James' Park on a wet night, he will be assured a warm reception at home to Wimbledon today.

If so it would represent a personal calamity for James who has not missed a Liverpool game for almost four years. Not since February 19, 1994, when he came on for Bruce Grobbelaar at Elland Road has James observed a Liverpool game from the bench — 203 consecutive appearances.

Many will be staggered by that statistic, because in more than a few games James has been less than steadfast, in particular his walking windmill display in Paris last April in the Cup Winners' Cup semi-final will live long in his critics' memories.

And yet of late, James — still only 27, Friedel is three months younger — has been in good form and a notion gaining credibility is that James has been just as unimpaired by his critics as they have been by him. The absence of a robust centre-half has been significant in Liverpool's inconsistency.

But now for the first time there is a capable replacement training alongside James at Anfield under the tutelage of Joe Corrigan, and judging by Friedel's demeanour the American does not want to keep his match gloves clean much longer.

"I'll be patient for as long as I can see light at the end of



On the way in? ... Brad Friedel is 'ready to play' DAVID LEAH

the tunnel," he said this week. "But if there isn't any, then I'll stop this."

Should Evans persist with James the decision will be made for Friedel and there should be no shortage of takers for a player with 53 United States caps. Rangers have shown an interest while only DFE regulations prevented him being Newcastle's keeper after the 1994 World Cup.

"I actually signed a contract with Newcastle," said Friedel. "But I came over on a visitor's visa and never got the chance to play — the DFE wouldn't give me a work per-

mit. It has been frustrating not playing first-team football in the short time I have been at Liverpool, but it was far worse then because I knew I wouldn't be able to play however well I did in training. At least I have a chance here. I am ready to play. Today could be the day."

Three Liverpool fans jailed for four months with another four suspended after a street brawl before a UEFA Cup match in Strasbourg last October are to be released on condition they leave France immediately and do not return before October, well after the World Cup finals.

## Cat in ashes triumph

## Football Diary

Martin Thorpe

SO farewell then Smokey the cat. The famous moggie whose home for 15 years was Queens Park Rangers' Loftus Road ground, was knocked down by a car in August and killed.

After his cremation his ashes were kept in the Loftus Road office. But it appears that Smokey felt a bit confined and seems to have made his displeasure known. Since his demise the form of Rangers and Wasps, who share the ground, has been nothing short of miserable.

So both clubs decided to do something to change their luck for 1998. On New Year's Eve they sprinkled Smokey's ashes on the pitch. And since then the form of both teams has, er, risen from the dead.

"Things are certainly looking up and we think it's down to Smokey," said Sarah Holt, who works in the Loftus Road office. "Smokey was a QPR through and through and everyone knew him. After he died we kept his ashes in the office. But, with things not going so well on the pitch, we decided to scatter them outside. Now I think our luck is changing."

MONEY, cars, houses, holidays, share options, flying in relatives. The list of inducements for players and managers to join clubs is endless. But for the person who takes charge of the Anglers Arms Sunday League side in Northumberland, it is a bit of a different kind.

The post of team manager carries with it a season's permit to fish free on the nearby River Coquet — normal price £2,500. The idea was that of John Young, a pub manager, who was having trouble hooking someone for the post. It is a bit of a desperate need, lead to drastic measures," he says.

John nearly contacted that keen angler Jack Charlton but then thought he was too big a fish.

NOTTINGHAM Forest's e-mail newsletter nearly had supporters booking trips to Scotland recently. Part of the instructions on how to pay for merchandise included the line: "If you can buy a postal order in Stirling, that will be okay." It took two hours to trawl through the 300 complaints.

CUE jokes about drawing first blood, adding bite up front and fear of crosses: Coventry are signing Viorel Moldovan was born in Transylvania, 14km (8½ miles) from Dracula's castle.

AFTER flash motors, "speed garage" is now the music of choice for motor racing Premier League drivers. "We had around £20 million worth of Premiership footballers in on the same night," claims Dave Norton of Twice As Nice, a Lambeth club, in The Big Issue. "They spent most of the night on the dance floor and there was champagne aplenty." Rio Ferdinand, Ian Wright, Jamie Redknapp and Robbie Fowler get a mention they might not want their managers and dietitians to see.

IT SEEMS to be a BBC dispute. Hot on the controversial heels of John Motson's admission that he struggled to tell blacks apart comes news that Sue Barker has similar problems. On a recent Question of Sport they put up a picture of Ade Mafe, the Chelsea fitness coach, whom the contestant identified as Frank Sinclair. Correct, said Sue Barker, who awarded the point. Asked in the next Chelsea programme what message he would put on a T-shirt, Sinclair replied: "Sue Barker, I am not Ade Mafe."

FOOTBALL imitates life. In the week when it was revealed that the average British boy is as thick as a Premiership wage packet, the in-form Sunderland striker Kevin Phillips was the subject of a questionnaire in the club's fanzine A Love Supreme. In it he revealed that his favourite book is Paul Gascoigne's "autobiography". Worse. He said that it is the only book he has ever read.

Did you hear about the Georgie fan who thought Help the Aged was Newcastle United's campaign to find a new striker.

## Premiership-preview

## Berti's baptism of fire at United

Russell Thomas

THE BOOKMAKERS have decided. The ageing Axis powers of Jürgen Klinsmann and Nicola Berti cannot win the battle against the English young bloods of Manchester United at Old Trafford today.

The punters overwhelm-

ingly believe United's home will become a Theatre of Nightmares for Christian Gross's strugglers, even if Tottenham's Swiss coach, greatly assisted by the German, has just brought in that inexhaustible Italian, Berti.

But the odds are that the midfielder, given his debut today, and his new teammates will soon run out of gas

against United. William Hill are offering 13-2 against a Spurs win — the longest-odds in a fixture between these North-South rivals.

How the 30-year-old Berti, stuck on the Internazionale bench this season, will fare against United's youthful midfield is one intriguing question; another is how Teddy Sheringham, compares with his former Spurs team-mate.

The Englishman, 31, calls Klinsmann, 38, "the ultimate strike partner". Sheringham prospered alongside the German at White Hart Lane and promised: "At the end of my career I'll be proud to say I played alongside Jürgen."

If Sheringham does not score, the odds are that Andy Cole will. Indeed United's 19-goal striker has been heavily backed at 18-1 to deliver a hat-trick today. Cole's task may not be hindered by the 20-year-old Norwegian Espen Baardsen being pitched in for only his second start in Spurs' goal.

Roy Hodgson yesterday took an eye off his second Carling Manager of the Month award to focus on Derby and their leading

scorer Francesco Balzano. Blackburn know this Italian is an ultra-sharp threat at Pride Park tomorrow.

Hodgson knows Balzano from his Serie A days and — shades of the old Klinsmann — questioned another side of his game. "He is a very dangerous customer, particularly in the area. He goes to ground quite easily and sometimes he gets penalties." Without his suspended team-mate Stefano Eranio, Balzano will be taking them as well.

Bentha's eyes are still on Ian Wright, who would not comment yesterday on Graeme Souness's reputed £4 million offer, despite Arsène Wenger's resistance to any deal for the 34-year-old.

Wenger, preparing to confront Leeds — and George Graham — at Highbury, praised the striker's "defiant attitude on his return at West Ham in midweek."

"He's simply not for sale," said Wenger. "It's not in the club's interest to sell our best players. Ian is the best. I wish I've ever worked with. We would never be able to replace him. It took 40 years to find a scorer like him."

## High Court poses threat to Venables as Pompey chief

TERRY VENABLES's role as chairman of Portsmouth comes under threat next Wednesday when he faces a High Court action to bar him from running a company.

The former England coach faces proceedings brought by the Department of Trade and Industry after being accused, among other things, of allowing his business associate Eddie Ashby to help him run Tottenham Hotspur five years ago, contrary to the restrictions placed on Ashby as an undischarged bankrupt at the time. Venables was then Spurs' chief executive.

Ashby, who has just been released from prison after being convicted of involvement in the running of a company while banned, is expected to give evidence in the case.

If found guilty, Venables will be able to retain his majority shareholding in Portsmouth and remain as chairman, but his role will be severely hampered because he will be banned from making any decisions affecting the running of the First Div-

ision club or any other company. Venables, who is also coach of the Australia national team, faces four counts of malpractice brought by the DTI following a lengthy investigation into his business dealings two years ago.

The DTI said yesterday that Venables faces two accusations relating to his involvement "in a number of companies. These include Tottenham Hotspur Football Club and Tottenham Hotspur plc, Edenmore plc and Scribes West."

Under the Company Directors Disqualification Act of 1986, a disqualified Venables would be unable to be involved "in the management, formation or promotion of a company". Venables was unavailable for comment yesterday.

The effects of the case are further muted by the fact that the Fratton Park club's other major shareholder, Martin Gregory, has claimed that the majority shareholding to Portsmouth was never transferred to Venables's name. Venables denies this.

## Kendall blasts Spurs

Ian Ross

THE Everton manager Howard Kendall yesterday launched a vitriolic attack on Tottenham Hotspur over their handling of the Andy Hinchcliffe's proposed move to White Hart Lane. The left-back's £3 million switch was called off amid much confusion on Thursday afternoon after Hinchcliffe was told he was not fit enough to complete his transfer.

As Kendall condemned Tottenham's actions as "disgraceful", the London club switched their attentions to another left-sided defender. The player now targeted by the Spurs coach Christian Gross is believed to be Juventus's 28-year-old Portuguese international Manuel Dimas,

who is available for £1.5m.

"The whole affair is beginning to look like a Brian Rix farce," Kendall said yesterday. "The way things have been conducted is not at all professional. I am hearing conflicting reports in the media as to why they pulled out of this deal but I have heard nothing official from Tottenham themselves."

"This is not a case of us being upset because we don't now have £3 million to spend. This is about a player's future."

"Having gone so far down the road to signing a player, to then pull out just because he might be unavailable for one game is an absolute nonsense. I feel for the lad. He has been scrupulously honest and there has been treated like this. It's a disgrace."

The Chelsea manager Ruud Gullit also had harsh words, but for one of his own players — the Norwegian goalkeeper Frode Grodas, who earlier this week accused Gullit of damaging his chances of selection for the World Cup by leaving him out of the Chelsea side.

Grodas, a member of Chelsea's FA Cup-winning team last May, has been ignored this season. But Gullit revealed that the player had turned down the chance to join the Belgian club Antwerp on loan for the rest of the season, and that no English or Scottish club had expressed any interest. "The fact is that nobody wants him," said Gullit. "You'll have to ask him why he's staying. Maybe he's the money. If he doesn't want to go, we can't do anything."

## Scottish preview

## Gascoigne may be punished for 'flute' playing incident

Patrick Glenn

THE Football Association's chief executive has given the strongest indication yet that Paul Gascoigne could be punished for impersonating a flute-player as he warmed up during the second half as a substitute in the Celtic v Rangers match.

Ferry is threatening to discipline Rangers and the England midfielder unless the Scottish champions take appropriate action. He also suggests that the club should make any punishment public.

"Gascoigne's action was unprofessional and inflammatory," said Ferry. "Having seen down this road before I wonder to what extent the association's signals to club and player have been heeded. If necessary, then I am in no doubt that the association will bring this message home graphically."

Gascoigne is likely to be confined to the bench again today as Rangers seek to recover their form in the match against Aberdeen at Ibrox. As well as being troubled by the off-field controversy he has had influenza.

Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, considered that Gascoigne was not ready for a full 90 minutes against Celtic eight days ago as he had been missing for five weeks because of suspension. "Now flu has kept him from making

the progress that a normal week's work would have brought," said Smith. "He did a little training yesterday and is virtually in the same position as a week ago."

Gascoigne has been affected by the same virus that caused the defender Joachim Björklund to miss the Old Firm match, which Rangers lost 2-0 to reduce their Premier Division lead to one point. The Swede is back in the squad but Ian Ferguson, Gascoigne's fellow midfielder, has also contracted the illness and will not play today.

Aberdeen have already forced two draws with Rangers at Ibrox and Pittodrie and their optimism has been heightened by victories in their last two matches under their new manager Alex Miller that have taken them off the bottom of the league.

Celtic travel to Motherwell without the defender Enrico Annan, who has been allowed to go back to Italy because his father is in hospital. The full-back Stephane Mahe, recovered from injury, is likely to replace him as the only change to the side who beat Rangers.

Dundee United will have the Cameroon striker Jean-Jacques Misse-Misse in the team for the home match against Kilmarnock. The international quit Trabzonspor as a free agent when the Turks could not pay his wages.

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